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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

SIXTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

5 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXLIV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE THIRTY-FIRST DAY OF MARCH
TO THE TWELFTH DAY OF APRIL, 1905.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1905.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,
UNDER CONTRACT WITH HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY
WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

8472

CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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L. Castlemaine,
L. Lyveden;

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E. Verulam,
E. Dartrey (chairman),
L. Oranmore and Browne,
L. Shute (*V. Barrington*),
L. Estcourt;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday the 11th of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee; with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 3

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THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT.

Lord Muskerry 6

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of Sections 78 and 87 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in connection with the tonnage of merchant ships, so far as the interests of merchant officers and seamen are concerned, is defective in constitution and calculated to defeat the objects for which it has been formed."—(*The Lord Muskerry.*)

Lord Ellenborough 11
The President of the Board of Trade (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) .. 12
Lord Muskerry 15

On Question, resolved in the negative.

House adjourned at Five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 31ST MARCH, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]: Hastings Harbour District Railway)Abandonment) Bill [Lords]

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 16

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Morley Corporation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 16

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill.—Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 16

London Southern Tramways Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 16

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).—Sir HENRY KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday next, at Two of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 16

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).—Sir JOSEPH LEESE reported from the Committee on Group G of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Wednesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 16

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petition from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table 17

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Portobello, in favour; to lie upon the Table 17

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Newmiln, in favour; to lie upon the Table 17

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Bradford; Brampton; Brockley (four); Chertsey; Clapham; Darlington; Exeter; Hampstead; Lewisham (three); Liverpool; New Cross; Northampton (four); Putney; and Streatham; to lie upon the Table 17

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Evesham; and North London; to lie upon the Table 17

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.—Petition from Crewe, in favour; to lie upon the Table 17

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 27th March, 1905, relating to Seamen's Lodging Houses in the County Borough of Salford [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 17

EXPLOSIVE ACT, 1875.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 27th March, 1905, providing that Picric Acid and Picrates, and mixtures of Picric Acid, shall be deemed to be explosives within the meaning of the Act, with certain exceptions [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 17

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IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of February, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 18

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.—Account presented, of all moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all Contracts for the grant of Deferred Life Annuities and for Payments on Death made, during the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 107.] .. 18

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Public Records (Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues.) Copy of Second Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act] 18

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

EXPLOSIONS OF GAS IN TELEPHONE INSPECTION CHAMBERS—PRECAUTIONS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Lord Stanley 18

LEARNERS IN THE POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Lord Stanley 19

RELIEF OF THE UNEMPLOYED.—Question, Mr. J. H. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 19

ESTATE OF THE LATE THOMAS FLYNN.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Earl Percy 20

THE CHURCH DISPUTE IN SCOTLAND—DISTURBANCES AT AUCHTERARDER, PERTHSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 20

DISMISSALS OF DOCKYARD EMPLOYEES.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 20

IRISH AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—CATHOLIC CLERKS IN THE VETERINARY BRANCH.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 21

AMOUNTS EXPENDED ON MILITARY WORKS APART FROM ANNUAL ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Bromley, Davenport 21

Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Compton Rickett (*Scarborough*) 22
Mr. William Abraham (*Glamorganshire, Rhondda*) 31

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."—(*Mr. Compton Rickett.*)

Colonel Pilkington (*Lancashire, Newton*) 32
Mr. Findlay (*Lanarkshire, N.E.*) 35

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Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 35
Mr. Atherley-Jones (Durham, N.W.) 36
Sir William Tomlinson (Preston) 38
Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) 40
The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.) 41

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc," put and agreed to.—(*Mr. T. Richards.*)

Sir Francis Powell 45

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Dr. Shipman (Northampton) 46
Sir Richard Jebb (Cambridge University) 48

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir William Tomlinson 49
Captain Jessel (St. Pancras, S.) 50

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now', and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir William Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross) 53
Colonel Welby (Taunton) 54
Mr. Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 56
Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 58
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 59
Mr. Talbot (Oxford University) 61
Mr. Arthur Henderson (Durham, Barnard Castle) 62
Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.) 63
Sir John Rolleston (Leicester) 65
Mr. Benn (Devonport) 66
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 68
Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) 69
The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 71
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 76
Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston) 80

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 175 ; Noes, 25. (Division List No. 98.)

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 171 , Noes, 21. (Division List No. 99.)

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Dr. Shipman.*)

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceedings, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Monday next.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn" (Sir A. Acland-Hood) put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-three minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order 85

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water ; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas ; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table. 85

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.] ; Hessle Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 85

Morley Corporation Bill.—Brought from the Commons ; read 1ª ; and referred to the Examiners 85

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received To-morrow 85

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).—Forty-seventh Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended December 31st, 1904 .. 85

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3332. Mexico ; No. 3333. Germany 85

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(MISCELLANEOUS).—No. 632. Silk trade and yield of cocoons in Italy in 1904 .. 85

ARMY.—Return showing number and cost of small arms, sword bayonets, machine guns, etc., manufactured in the Royal Small Arms Factories at Enfield and Birmingham, and by the trade, during the past ten years; also the number of men employed in the two Government Factories for the same period, and their wages 86

NATIONAL GALLERY (IRELAND).—Report of the Director to the Board of Governors and Guardians, for the year 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 86

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).—Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on March 31st, 1905, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year 86

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.—Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27 and 28 Victoria, chap. 43, 45 and 46 Victoria, chap. 51, and 50 and 51 Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended December 31st, 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 86

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydvil Scheme Comfirmation) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order). The Amendments proposed by the Select Committee made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received To-morrow 86

Service of Militiamen Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair].

Clause 1.

The Earl of Galloway 87

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, after the word 'Kingdom' to insert the words 'it being understood that, should they thus be carried or ordered out of the United Kingdom, a bounty of not less than thirty days pay and allowances shall be given to every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man on embarkation.'"—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 88

Amendment, by leave of the Committee withdrawn.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Remaining Clause agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment.

Moved, "That the Standing Committee be negatived."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore*).

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tram-roads Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 90

SUBSTITUTED BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—North British Railway (General Powers) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 90

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill· Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 90

Cork Junction Railways Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 91

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Woolwich Borough Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 91

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 91

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Bute; and Milnathort; to lie upon the Table 91

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Petition from Birkenhead, in favour; to lie upon the Table 91

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Sidcup, against; to lie upon the Table 91

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from Messingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 91

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petition from West Didsbury, in favour; to lie upon the Table 91

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Forty-seventh Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland for the year ended 31st December, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 91

NATIONAL GALLERY (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report of the Director of the National Gallery of Ireland to the Board of Governors and Guardians for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 91

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS FUND.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th March; *Dr. Macnamara*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 108] 92

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st December, 1904, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 92

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).—Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 109] 92

ARMY.—Copy presented, of Return showing number and cost of small arms, swords, bayonets, machine guns, etc., manufactured in the Royal Small Arms Factories at Enfield and Birmingham, and by the trade, during the past ten years; also the number of men employed in the two Government Factories for the same period and their wages [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 92

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TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 632 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 92

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3332 and 3333 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 92

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TECHNICAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES IN COUNTY KERRY.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 94

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RULES FOR USE OF COMMERCIAL MOLE AT GIBRALTAR.—Question, Mr. Bill (Staffordshire, Leek); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 98

PREMIER DIAMOND MINE PROFITS.—Question, Mr. Rose (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 99

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Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 110.]

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Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 136.] 151

Whale Fisheries (Scotland) Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 137.] 151

NEW BILLS.

Sale of Coke Bill.—" To amend the Weights and Measures Act, 1889, respecting the Sale of Coke by weight," presented by Mr. Rose; supported by Mr. Raymond Greene; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 11th May, and to be printed. [Bill 138.] 151

London Hospitals (Exemption from Rates) Bill.—" To provide for the exemption of Hospitals in London from local Rates," presented by Mr. Hayes Fisher; supported by Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Sir Harry Samuel, Captain Jessel, and Mr. James Bailey; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 139.] 151

Licensing Act (1902) (Registration of Clubs) Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Licensing Act, 1902, in respect of the striking of clubs off the register," presented by Mr. Worsley-Taylor; supported by Sir John Dorington, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Cripps, Sir Robert Reid, and Mr. Ashton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 140.] .. 152

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905–6.—Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve)

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at Home and abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Mr. Churchill (*Oldham*) 152

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,101,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

Mr. Griffith Boscawen (*Kent, Tunbridge*) 168
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 171
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) .. 179
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 192
Major Evans Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 203
Captain Norton (*Newington, W.*) 205
Colonel Welby (*Taunton*) 213
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 218

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

London County Council (Tramways) Bill [BY ORDER].

Mr. Whitmore (*Chelsea*) 221
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 224

Motion made, and question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the London County Council (Tramways) Bill to omit Tramway No. 1, Tramway No. 1a, Tramway No. 2, and Tramway No. 2a."—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

Mr. Causton (*Southwark, W.*) 226
Mr. Cohen (*Islington, E.*) 227
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 228
Mr. Burdett Coutts (*Westminster*) 231
Sir Joseph Dimsdale (*London*) 232

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 171; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 100.)

Mr. SPEAKER gave his casting vote with the "Noes."

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad

(exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,101,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Mr. Charles Hobhouse 237
Mr. Reginald Lucas (*Portsmouth*) 241
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 242

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Peel.*)

Mr. Churchill 251
Mr. Arnold-Forster 251

And, it being midnight, the Motion to report Progress lapsed without Question put, and the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this day.

Army (Annual) Bill. [Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed. "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 253

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) .. 255
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 255

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this day.

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THE PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE FROM THE DEBATES.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 256
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 257
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 257
Mr. Churchill (*Oldham*) 257
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (*Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington*) 259
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 259

No reply was given.

Adjourned at twenty-nine minutes before one o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 4TH APRIL, 1905.

INTRODUCED.—Andrew Graham Murray, Lord Justice General and Lord President of the Court of Session in Scotland, having been created Baron Dunedin of Stenton, in the county of Perth, was (in the usual manner) introduced 261

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment); South Metropolitan Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 261

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Malvern Water Bill ought to be dispensed with. That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for the Leven's Patent Bill ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill. Read, and agreed to 261

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [H.L.]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Truro Water Bill [H.L.]; Reported, with Amendments 261

Clacton-on-Sea Commissioners Bill [H.L.]; Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over to-morrow 261

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 261

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Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Stewart of Garlies (E. Galloway) be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Hay (E. Kinnoull); read, and agreed to 262

Torpoint Urban District Water Bill [H.L.].—Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over to-morrow 262

Marylebone Chapels Bill [H.L.].—The Lord Bishop of London (in his place) consented to the Bill 262

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.. 262

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour; of the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Glasgow; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 262

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st December, 1904, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with reports of the Inspecting Officers, Assistant Inspecting Officers, and Sub-Inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into. Part I. Returns of Accidents 262

COLONIES (MISCELLANEOUS).—No. 30. Pitcairn Island (Report by Mr. R. J. Simons) 262

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3334. Honduras.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 262

Workmen's Compensation Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Belper 263

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Belper.*)

Lord Davey 273
The Marquess of Ripon 277
The Earl of Camperdown 281
The Lord Bishop of London 282
Lord James of Hereford 283
The Earl of Halsbury 284

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on the second sitting day after the recess at Easter.

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Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydvil Scheme (Confirmation) Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 285

Street Betting Bill [H.L.].—Debate on Amendment moved after Third Reading resumed (according to order).

The said Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Lord Davey 285

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 5, after the word 'street' to insert the word 'or,' and to leave out from the word 'public' to the word 'on' in line 6 and insert the word 'place.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 286
Lord James of Hereford 286

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 2, line 12, to leave out from the word 'not' to the end of the clause and to insert the words 'and the words "public place" shall include any public park, garden, or sea-beach, and any unenclosed ground to which the public for the time being have unrestricted access.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 17, after the word 'racecourse' to insert the words 'for racing with horses.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

MILITARY WORKS AT ST. LUCIA.

Lord Tweedmouth 286
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 287

GERMANY AND BRITISH TRADERS.

The Earl of Jersey 288
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 290
Lord Stanmore 291

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 4TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].—Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]; Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 292

Railway Bills (Group No. 3).—Sir Lewis McIver reported from the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Thursday, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 292

Message from the Lords.

They have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to further extend the periods for the commencement of the construction and for the completion of the tramways, tramroads, and other works, and for the taking of lands authorised by the West Cumberland Electric Tramways Act, 1901; to extend the period limited by The West Cumberland Electric Tramways Act, 1903, within which distributing mains for the supply of electricity were to be laid down; and for other purposes." [West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers upon the Hessle Gas Light and Coke Company." [Hessle Gas Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Constitution of the Trustees of the Clyde Navigation; and for other purposes." [Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords.] 292

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Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Aberdeen (two); Innellan; and Macduff; to lie upon the Table 296

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petition from Lancashire and Cheshire, in favour; to lie upon the Table 296

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against; from Durham; Newlyn; Sancreed; and Walthamstow; to lie upon the Table 296

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Rating of Machinery Bill.—Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table 296

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Sunday) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Erdington; and Ruskington; to lie upon the Table 296

Sugar Tax.—Petition from York, for repeal; to lie upon the Table 296

Wyer, Thomas Roland.—Petition of Thomas Roland Wyer, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table 296

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Agricultural Rates Act, 1896 (Grants to Local Authorities).—Return presented, relative thereto, [ordered March 16th; *Mr. Jesse Collings*]; to lie upon the Table 296

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Danger of Fire from Explosions caused by Electrical Trains.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 301

Repair of Cable between Tory Island and the Mainland.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 301

Loss of the "Khyle"—Telegraphic Communication between Lighthouses and the Shore.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 302

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Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for amending the law relating to the Administration of Oaths for the purpose of Proceedings in Prize Courts." [Prize Courts Bill [Lords].

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SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES. 1905–6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,101,000, be granted for the said service."—(*Major Seely.*)

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Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 191; Noes, 234. (Division List No. 101.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 387

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,100,500, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Malcolm.*)

Mr. Arnold-Forster 393

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

INDIRECT TAXES ON FOOD.

Sir Joseph Leese (*Lancashire, Accrington*) 394
Mr. Seely (*Lincoln*) 399

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House disapproves on principle of the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce, as being especially burdensome to the poor and injurious to the welfare of the nation; and believes that no proportionate remission from existing duties on tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa would afford compensation for the imposition of such taxes; and declares its opinion that any Colonial Conference that is entered upon, except on the understanding that this country will not agree to the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce, will result in failure.—(*Sir Joseph Leese.*)

Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 406
Mr. Claude Lowther (*Cumberland, Eskdale*) 409
Sir Henry Fowler (*Wolverhampton, E.*) 411
Lord Hugh Cecil (*Greenwich*) 416
Sir Brampton Gurdon (*Norfolk, N.*) 421
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) 422

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House disapproves on principle of the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce as being especially burdensome to the poor and injurious to the welfare of the nation; and believes that no proportionate remission from existing duties on tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa would afford compensation for the imposition of such taxes; and declares its opinion that any Colonial Conference that is entered upon, except on the understanding that this country will not agree to the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce, will result in failure."—(*Sir Joseph Leese.*)

STANDING COMMITTEE PROCEDURE (ACTION OF CHAIRMAN).

Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 424
Mr. Galloway (*Manchester, S.W.*) 426

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Motion made, and Question proposed, " That, doubts having arisen as to certain rulings given by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Trade on 21st March, in the opnion of this House, it is expedient that rules should be laid down for the guidance of Chairmen of Standing Committees."—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 427
Sir Francis Powell (*Wigan*) 431

Amendment proposed—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' and that a Select Committee be appointed to consider the procedure of Standing Committees, and to report whether any and what amendments in such procedure are desirable.' "—(*Sir Francis Powell.*)

Question, " That those words be there added," put, and negatived.

Main Queston again proposed.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE FROM DEBATES.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn." —(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Boroughs*) 432
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 432
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 432
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 434
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (*Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington*) 434
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 435
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 436

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 5TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Birmingham Corporation Bill.—Brentwood Gas Bill; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill; Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill. As amended, to be considered To-morrow 437

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [LORDS].—Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]; Malvern Water Bill. To be read a second time To-morrow .. 437

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Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill (by Order).—Epping Gas-Bill (by Order); Great Eastern Railway Bill (by Order); Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill (by Order); Loughborough Corporation Bill (by Order); Norwich Union Life Insurance Society (by Order); Weybridge and Walton-upon Thames Electric Supply Bill (by Order). Third Reading deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting) 437

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (by Order).—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting) 437

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 437

Colne Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 437

PETITIONS.

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—Petition from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table 437

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Bathgate; and Catrine; to lie upon the Table 438

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against; from Chipping Ongar; Cuckfield; Durham (two); Gamlingay; Highlands; Newcastle-on-Tyne; Richmond (two); and Woodham; to lie upon the Table 438

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Sunday) Bill.—Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 438

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896 (Grants to Local Authorities).—Return [presented April 4th] to be printed. [No. 111.] 438

Coal Exports, Etc.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered March 2nd; *Mr. David Alfred Thomas*]: to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.] 438

Vaccination Exemption Certificates.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address March 27th; *Mr. Weir*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.] 438

Polling Districts (County of Middlesex).—Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Middlesex rearranging the Polling Districts in the Uxbridge Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 438

Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881 (Orders).—Copy presented, of an Order in Council, dated April 1st, 1905, adding Wicklow to the ports at which Explosives may be landed [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 438

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CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT.—Abstract Account presented, of Receipts and Payments of the Treasury Solicitor, in the year ended December 31st, 1904, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial Intestacies, etc.), in which accounts were opened in the books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.] 438

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3334 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 439

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SALE OF OBSOLETE WAR VESSELS AT CHATHAM—NAMES AND PRICES.—Question, Mr. J. H. Lewis (Flint Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 440

DISCHARGE OF DOCKYARD EMPLOYEES AT PORTSMOUTH.—Question, Mr. Tankerville Chamberlayne (Southampton); Answer, Mr. Arthur Lee 441

MAXIMUM WAGES OF PROVINCIAL SORTING CLERKS, TELEGRAPHISTS AND POSTMEN.—Question, Mr. Priestley (Grantham); Answer, Lord Stanley .. 441

MAXIMUM SALARY OF LONDON TELEGRAPHISTS.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 441

PAY OF LEARNERS IN ENNISKILLEN TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 442

SICK LEAVE IN THE POST OFFICE—CASE OF MR. BULLAMORE.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Lord Stanley 443

TELEGRAM HANDED IN AT CLONES RAIL OFFICE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Lord Stanley 443

TUBERCULOSIS—LOSS INCURRED BY BUTCHERS DURING 1904.—Question, Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 443

SALE OF ADULTERATED FOREIGN BUTTER—INSPECTION IN ENGLAND.—Question, Mr. Brigg; Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 444

INCOME TAX ASSESSMENTS.—Question, Mr. Bright (Shropshire, Oswestry); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 444

CULTIVATION OF BEET SUGAR IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 444

IRISH FISHERIES—SCARCITY OF FISH.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 445

IDENTIFICATION OF FROZEN MEAT IMPORTED INTO IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 446

EVICTED TENANTS REINSTATED IN COUNTY KERRY.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 446

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POLICE PATROL DUTY IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Brigg; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 447

STEAMSHIP SUBSIDIES TO THE WEST INDIES.—Question, Mr. Brigg; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 447

NEWRY TRAINING GROUND—TRANSFER OF THE 2ND WEST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT FROM BELFAST.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer Mr. Arnold-Forster 448

GRIEVANCES OF PENSIONED RESERVE OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. Pike Pease (Darlington); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 448

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

TRAINING OF SEAMEN.—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 449

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES—BRITISH CRUISERS ON THE FRENCH SHORE.—Question, General Laurie; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 450

ARMY ENLISTMENT STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 450

HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster 450

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST.—Question, Mr. Charles Allen (Gloucestershire, Stroud); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 451

SALES OF INFANTRY REGULATION BOOTS.—Question, Mr. George White (Norfolk, N.W.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley-Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 451

DISTRESS AT ENFIELD.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Bromley-Davenport 451

NORTH RANDFONTEIN MINE—COOLIE DISTURBANCES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 452

TRANSVAAL CONSTITUTION.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 452

WAR MATERIAL FACTORIES IN INDIA.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 453

ALIENS IN BRITISH AND IRISH GAOLS.—Question, Mr. Forde Ridley (Bethnal Green, S.W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 453

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EXPIRING ANNUITIES.—Questions, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answers, Mr. Akers-Douglas 455

IRISH LAND STOCK.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 455

HANLEY TELEGRAPH STAFF AND DUTIES AT STOKE.—Question, Mr. Shaw (Stafford); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 456

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES.—Questions, Lord Bingham (Surrey, Chertsey) and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, Lord Stanley 456

AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACTS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Lord Stanley 458

COST OF TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Lord Stanley 458

LONDON AND PARIS POST OFFICE ORDERS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Lord Stanley 459

EGYPTIAN POSTAL RATES.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Lord Stanley 459

SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, Lord Stanley 459

LONDON BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND THE UNEMPLOYED.—Questions, Mr. Crooks and Mr. Benn (Devonport); Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 460

BORROWING POWERS OF MUNICIPALITIES.—Question, Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 460

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MEMBERS' SMOKING ROOM.—Questions, Mr. Bigwood (Middlesex, Brentford), Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 462

SCOTTISH FISHERIES—CRUISERS FOR POLICE DUTY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) .. 462

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 463

IRISH AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT ENDOWMENT FUND.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 463

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IVEAGH-PIRRIE MOTOR SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 464

MOUNTMELLICK PETTY SESSIONS CLERKSHIPS.—Questions, Mr. Delany; Answers, Mr. Walter Long 464

IRISH TEACHERS' GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 465

IRISH PUBLIC BODIES ORDER—MAYO PROTESTS.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 466

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KILMEEDY NATIONAL SCHOOLS, LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Limerick, W.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 467

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LIMERICK MALICIOUS DAMAGE CLAIM.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 469

MOHER RELIEF OF DISTRESS SCHEME.—Questions, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.) and Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 469

BELFAST AND LONDON MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 470

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—Question, Mr. Benn; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. G. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 470

THE ALIENS BILL.—Question, Mr. Forde Ridley; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 471

VACCINATION OF PUBLIC SERVANTS.—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 471

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 472

MINISTERS AND COMPANY DIRECTORSHIPS.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 472

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 473

EARLY CLOSING (SATURDAY) INTOXICATING DRINKS (IRELAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Wolff (Belfast, E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 473

SPARKBROOK AND ENFIELD FACTORIES.—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 473

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON CHURCH DISORDERS.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 474

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE RETALIATION RESOLUTION.—Questions, Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs), Captain Donelan (Cork, E.) and Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 474

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals) Bill: Sir Charles Dilke; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Thomas Roe.

Mr. HALSEY further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Tennant: and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Reports to lie upon the Table 476

Prevention of Corruption Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 142.] 476

Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 143.] 476

Prize Courts Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 144.] 476

NEW BILLS.

Public Health (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and tenure of office of Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors; and for other purposes," presented by Dr. Hutchinson; supported by Mr. William Abraham, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Ernest Gray, Colonel Legge, Mr. Whittaker, Mr. Fenwick, Major Jameson, and Sir John Tuke; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 146.] 476

Lunacy Act Amendment (London) Bill—"To authorise the London County Council to provide receiving houses for the reception of persons mentally afflicted or alleged to be of unsound mind, and to authorise the detention of such persons in such houses, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Sir John Tuke; supported by Mr. Burns, Mr. Benn, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Brigg, and Dr. Hutchinson; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 147.] 477

Parliamentary Voters (Registration) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and registration of Parliamentary Voters, and for other purposes relating to Elections," presented by Mr. Cremer; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Parrott, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham); to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 148.] 477

Registration of Firms Bill.—"To provide for the Registration of Firms and Persons carrying on business under trade names," presented by Mr. Emmott; supported by Sir James Heath, Sir William Holland, and Sir Walter Palmer; to be read a second time upon Friday May 12th, and to be printed. [Bill 149.] .. 477

County Courts Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to County Courts," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir James Woodhouse, Sir William Holland, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. J. A. Thomas; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 150.] .. 477

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (REPORTS OF MONEY COMMITTEES).—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committee of Ways and Means and Committees authorising the expenditure of Public Money, other than the Committee of Supply, may be entered upon at any hour after Midnight, though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sitting of the House."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) .. 477

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) .. 478
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) .. 479
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) .. 481
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) .. 482
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) .. 483
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) .. 484
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) .. 484

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'may,' to insert the words 'at least two days notice having previously been publicly given.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 488

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 241; Noes, 174. (Division List No. 102).

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committee of Ways and Means and Committees authorising the expenditure of public money, other than the Committee of Supply, may be entered upon at any hour after midnight, though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

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ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at home and abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,100,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Malcolm.*)

Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire) 493
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) .. 495
Sir Herbert Maxwell (Wigtonshire) 496
Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 498
Sir Andrew Agnew (Edinburgh, S.) 501
Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.) 502
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) 502
Mr. Dobbie (Ayr Burghs) 502
Mr. Hozier (Lanarkshire, S.) 503
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) 503

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 504

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,100,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 510
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 513
Mr. Churchill (Oldham) 520
Mr. Arnold-Forster 522
Mr. C. R. Spencer (Northamptonshire, Mid). 527
Colonel Pilkington (Lancashire, Newton) 529
Mr. Llewellyn (Somersetshire, N.) 532
Mr. Freeman Thomas (Hastings) 534
Lieut.-Colonel Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Burghs) 536
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) 536
Colonel Williams (Dorsetshire, W.) 538

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 187 ; Noes, 218. (Division List No. 103.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

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EVENING SITTING.

Accrington Corporation Bill (By Order); Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill (By Order); Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill (By Order).—Read the third time, and passed 543

South Suburban Gas Bill (By Order).—Read the third time, and passed [New Title] 543

Wrexham Gas Bill (By Order).—Read the third time, and passed 543

Acton Sewage Bill (By Order).—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time 543

Ilfracome Harbour and Improvement Bill (By Order).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 543

Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill (By Order).—[Not amended], considered; to be read the third time 543

Otley Improvement Bill (Changed from "Otley Gas and Improvement Bill") (By Order).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 543

Seaham Gas Bill (By Order).—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 543

Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill (By Order).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 543

COTTON SUPPLY (BRITISH DEPENDENCIES).

Sir William Tomlinson (Preston) 544
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 550

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the peril to which the industries of the United Kingdom using cotton as the principal raw material of their manufactures are exposed by their too great dependence on the United States of America as their source of supply, and the good results of the operations already undertaken by the British Cotton Growing Association, this House desires to express its appreciation of the benefits derived by the encouragement afforded by His Majesty's Government to the work of the association, and looks to a continuance of their good offices as one of the essential conditions of a speedy development of the resources of the Colonies, Dependencies, and Protectorates of the Crown as additional sources of supply of the cotton needed for the maintenance of regular and adequately remunerated employment in one of the greatest of the national industries."

Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire) 554
Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) 555
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 557
Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange) 561
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 563
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 564
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 566
Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 567

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Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in view of the peril to which the industries of the United Kingdom using cotton as the principal raw material of their manufacture are exposed by their too great dependence on the United States of America as their source of supply, and the good results of the operations already undertaken by the British Cotton Growing Association, this House desires to express its appreciation of the benefits derived by the encouragement afforded by His Majesty's Government to the work of the Association, and looks to a continuance of their good offices as one of the essential conditions of a speedy development of the resources of the Colonies, Dependencies, and Protectorates of the Crown as additional sources of supply of the cotton needed for the maintenance of regular and adequately remunerated employment in one of the greatest of the national industries.—(*Sir William Tomlinson.*)

LOCAL TAXATION.

Mr. Purvis (*Peterborough*) 570
Mr. Spear (*Devonshire, Tavistock*) 572

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the distinction, affirmed in the main Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, between services preponderantly national but generally onerous to the ratepayers and services preponderantly local which confer upon the ratepayers a direct and peculiar benefit, more or less commensurate with the burden, no arrangement of taxation is equitable which does not provide that local authorities have an amount assigned from the Imperial taxes fully representing the interest of the general community in local expenditure on onerous services."—(*Mr. Purvis.*)

Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 573

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

THE BRIGHTON ELECTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Boroughs*) 573
Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 575
Sir Charles Renshaw (*Renfrewshire, W.*) 576
Mr. Guest (*Plymouth*) 578
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 580
Mr. Churchill (*Oldham*) 582
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 585
Mr. Ernest Gray (*West Ham, N.*) 587
Mr. MacKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 588

Adjourned at five minutes before One o'clock.

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HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1905.

SAT FIRST.—The Lord Heytesbury sat first in Parliament after the death of his brother 589

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.].—Presented (pursuant to leave given on Tuesday last), and read 1ª 589

South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 589

Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 589

Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 589

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Second Reading (which stands appointed for To-morrow) put off to Monday next 589

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 589

Torpoint Urban District Water Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 589

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 589

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill. Read 2ª, and committed 589

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 590

Accrington Corporation Bill; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; South Suburban Gas Bill; Wrexham Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 590

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill. [H.L.].—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the councils of the county boroughs of Liverpool and Manchester, the County of Surrey, and the urban district of Willesden, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Was presented by the Lord President (E. Vane (M. Londonderry)); read 1a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 41) 590

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill—Read 2a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow .. 590

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Read 3a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 590

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydvil Scheme (Confirmation) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 590

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].—Petitions in favour of; of residents in Liverpool (13); Swansea; Manchester; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and Birmingham. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 590

LICENSED HOUSES.—Petitions for early closing of; of West London Band of Hope Union; and Cumberland Congregational Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 590

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).—Militia Training Return, 1904 591

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (PAINT AND COLOUR WORKS).—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by T. M. Legge, Esq., M.D., His Majesty's Medical Inspector of Factories, on the manufacture of paints and colours containing lead, as affecting the health of the operatives employed 591

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).—Report and tables for the year 1904 .. 591

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3335. China (Teng Yueh); No. 3336. France (Nantes).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 591

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.—Account up to 31st March, 1905 .. 591

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881.—Order in Council, dated 1st April, 1905, adding Wicklow to the ports at which explosives may be landed .. 591

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX).—Order, made by the County Council of the County of Middlesex, re-arranging the polling districts in the Uxbridge Parliamentary Division.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 591

Advertisements Regulation Bill [H.L.]

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 591

House to be in Committee to-morrow.

Service of Militiamen Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3a."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

The Earl of Wemyss 592
The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*) .. 594

On Question, Bill read 3a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Business of the House.

Lord Newton 595

Moved to resolve, 'That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider the advisability of carrying into effect the Resolution relating to Public Business passed by this House on the 25th of May, 1903."—(*The Lord Newton.*)

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Onslow*) 601
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 602
Earl Spencer 606
Lord James of Hereford 608
Lord Newton 608

On Question, their Lordships divided. Contents, 8; Not-Contents, 70.

Public Bills.

Lord James of Hereford 609

Moved to resolve, "That this House, recognising its duties as a deliberative Assembly, protests against the practice of introducing Bills into it under conditions which afford insufficient time for their consideration, and declares its intention to refuse to consider any Bill unless sufficient opportunity be afforded for due deliberation thereon."—(*The Lord James of Hereford.*)

Earl Spencer 613
The Earl of Rosebery 614
Viscount Goschen 616
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 617
The Marquess of Lansdowne 618
The Marquess of Ripon 619
The Earl of Wemyss 621

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six o'Clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 6th APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Substituted Bills (Standing Order 62 Complied With).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz:—Caledonian Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 622

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Great Northern Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 622

London Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 622

Birmingham Corporation Bill. (BY ORDER).—Bretwood Gas Bill (by Order); Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill (by Order). As amended, considered; to be read the third time 622

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords] (by Order); Malvern Water Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed 622

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill.—Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 623

Ealing Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 623

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for the suppression of Betting in Streets and other public places." [Streets Betting Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to incorporate the Nine Mile Point Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to revive and extend the period limited for the compulsory purchase of lands and to extend the period limited for the construction and completion of the harbour and works authorised by The Hastings Harbour Act, 1890, and The Hastings Harbour Act, 1897; and for other purposes." [Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for vesting the undertaking of the Harrow and Uxbridge Railway Company in the Metropolitan Railway Company; to provide for the consolidation of certain preference stocks of the company; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to Dissolve the Marriage of Sir Robert John McConnell, Baronet, of Windsor Avenue, in the county and city of Belfast, with Elsie George McConnell, his now wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other purposes." [McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords.] 623

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords]; Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]; McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 623

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PETITIONS.

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Ayr; Dundee; and Glasgow (three); to lie upon the Table 624

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petition from South Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 624

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against; from Beckham (four); Brighton; Bromley; Chichester; Hove; Kensington; Lewes (seven); Little Bardfield; Liverpool; Penzance (two); Petersham; Rugby; West Bromwich; and Worthing; to lie upon the Table 624

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) (Salaries).—Return [presented March 23rd] to be printed. [No. 115.] 624

Factory and Workshop (Paint and Colour Works).—Copy presented, of Report by T. M. Legge, esquire, His Majesty's Medical Inspector of Factories, on the Manufacture of Paints and Colours containing Lead, as affecting the health of the operatives employed [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 624

Emigration Statistics (Ireland).—Copy presented, of Emigration Statistics of Ireland for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 624

Railways Abandonment.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the—Mullingar, Kells, and Drohgeda Railway Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158b]; referred to the Committee on the Bill 624

Casualties to Ships.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered August 9th, 1904; *Mr. Lough*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.] .. 624

Army (Militia Training Establishments).—Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 625

Egyptian Guaranteed Loan of 1885.—Account presented, up to March 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 625

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3335 and 3336 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 625

Tramways and Light Railways (Street and Road).—Return ordered, "of Street and Road Tramways and Light Railways authorised by Act or Order, showing the amount of the Capital authorised, paid up, and expended; the length of line authorised and the length open for the public conveyance of passengers down to the 31st day of December, 1904, in respect of Companies, and the 31st day of March, 1905, in respect of Local Authorities; the gross Receipts, working Expenditure, net Receipts, and appropriation of net Receipts; the number of Passengers conveyed, quantity of Electrical Energy used, and the number of miles run by Cars during the year ended on the foregoing dates respectively; together with the number of Horses, Engines, and Cars at those dates (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 310, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law*) 625

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GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.—Return ordered, " of the amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other Public Offices on the 31st day of March, 1905, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 236, of Session 1904) :

£2½ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	£2¾ per Cent. War Loan.	Other Securities.	
				Annuities for terms of years.	Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills.

—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) 626

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

VISIT OF THE FRENCH FLEET—FACILITIES FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TAKING PART IN THE RECEPTION.—Question, Sir Thomas Wrightson (St Pancras, E.). Answer, Mr. Pretyman 626

CLOSING OF IRISH POLICE STATIONS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.) ; Answer, Mr Walter Long 626

FISHERY BOARD CRUISER " FREYA."—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) ; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 627

PUBLICATON OF REPORT OF LORD MANSFIELD'S COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Leveson-Gower (Sutherland) ; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 628

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SAILORS EMPLOYED ON BRITISH SHIPS.—Question, Sir Charles Cayner (Barrow-in-Furness) ; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 628

PREMIUMS FOR CARRYING BOY SAILORS.—Question, Sir Charles Cayner ; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 628

MUSIC HALL SKETCHES.—Question, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) ; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 629

COASTGUARD SURGEONS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly (Mayo, N.) ; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 629

SALE OF OBSOLETE DOCKYARD CHAINS.—Question, Mr. Arthur Henderson (Durham, Barnard Castle) ; Answer, Mr. Pretyman 629

PAY OF ILFORD POSTMEN.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford) ; Answer, Lord Stanley 630

LONDON POSTAL PORTERS.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.) ; Answer, Lord Stanley 630

MEMORIALS OF ASSISTANT CLERKS (ABSTRACTOR CLASS).—Question, Mr. Ernest Gray (West Ham, N.) ; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 631

SALARIES FEES OF LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 631

PROMOTION OF SECOND CLASS CLERKS AND EXAMINING OFFICERS IN THE CUSTOMS SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercromby); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 631

UNITED STATES AND ENGLAND — INTERPRETATION OF THE MOST FAVOURED NATION CLAUSE.—Question, Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); Answer, Earl Percy 632

COMMISSIONERS FOR THE REDUCTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 632

CIVILIAN SURGEONS ATTACHED TO SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY—DOUBLE PAYMENT OF INCOME TAX.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 633

IRISH HEAD LAND COMMISSION—APPEAL OF MR. DENIS CORKERAN.—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 633

ST PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION AT COAGH.—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.): Answer, Mr. Walter Long 634

INSPECTION OF IRISH FIRKIN BUTTER.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 634

SUGGESTED APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.—Question. Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 635

FARM OF RINGELLANE, KILCOLGAN.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 635

RULES UNDER THE IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 636

STRENGTH OF ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY IN COUNTY ROSCOMMON.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 636

CASE OF EX-LIEUTENANT KINGSTON.—Question, Sir George Fardell (Paddington, S.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 637

CIVILIAN SURGEONS ATTACHED TO SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY—CUSTOMS REBATE.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 637

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CONVERSION OF SERVICE RIFLES.—Question, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answer, Mr. Bromley Davenport 639

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AGREEMENT WITH AFGHANISTAN.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 640

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THE NEW POST OFFICE WAGES SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 642

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LEARNERS AND THE NEW WAGES SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Lord Stanley 643

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SEA ENCROACHMENT NEAR BRIGHTON.—Question, Sir H. Aubrey Fletcher (Sussex Lewis) and Mr. John Burns (Battersea); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) .. 644

EXCHEQUER ISSUES.—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 644

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UNDERFED SCHOOL CHILDREN — TEACHERS' DUTIES.—Question, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 645

PAUPER CHILDREN IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Ernest Gray (West Ham, N.); Answer, Sir William Anson 646

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SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast) and Mr. William Moore (Antrim, W.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 647

GALWAY UNTENANTED LANDS—CASE OF MR. ROTHWELL.—Question, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 649

POTATOE GROWING TRIALS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork Co., N.E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 650

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT—STOCKTAKERS.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 650

GORE BOOTH ESTATE, CO. SLIGO.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 651

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KING HARMAN ESTATE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 652

DRUMCONRATH MEDICAL RELIEF DISPENSARY.—Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 652

RATHMOLYN AND KILDALKEY POLICE STATIONS.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 653

NEW EDUCATION RULE 127 (b).—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 653

GRANT FOR AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES IN KERRY.—Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 654

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENTS IN CAVAN.—Questions, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.) and Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 654

IRISH LAND PURCHASE—INSTRUCTIONS TO INSPECTORS.—Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 655

LONGFIELD ESTATE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 655

GOOLD ESTATE, COUNTY LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Answer, Mr. Walter Long 656

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 656

SCHOOL BUILDING GRANTS FOR EAST LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 657

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BALLINA POST OFFICE REVISION.—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Lord Stanley 657

IRISH TELEGRAPH MESSENGERS—CAP AND BOOT CONTRACTS.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Lord Stanley 658

UNDERFED SCHOOL CHILDREN.—Questions, Dr .Macnamara and Mr. Crooks; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 658

PENSION REGULATIONS.—Questions, Dr. Macnamara and Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 659

SCOTTISH CHURCH DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 660

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Notts., Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 660

THE HOME SERVICE ARMY.—Question, Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answer, Mr. Arnold Forster 660

THE POSITION OF JUNIOR LORD OF THE TREASURY.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 661

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 662

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Ernest Amherst Villiers, Esquire, for the Borough of Brighton 663

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means .. 663

NEW BILLS.

Trades Unions Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Trades Unions," presented by Sir Alfred Hickman; supported by Sir James Heath, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Arthur Heath, and Mr. Galloway; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 151.] 663

Tuberculosis (Animals) Preventionand Compensation Bill.—"To provide for the Payment of Compensation to the owners of carcases of animals condemned after slaughter, and destroyed by order of a magistrate, on account of Tuberculosis, and to assist in the Prevention of Tuberculosis," presented by Mr. Ernest Gray; supported by Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Field, Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. David MacIver, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. William Rutherford, Mr. Schwann, and Mr. Tomkinson; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 152.] 663

Supply of Electricity Bill.—"To amend the Acts relating to Electric Lighting," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 153.] 663

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Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to Fisheries in Ireland, and for the better protection thereof," presented by Sir Henry Seton-Karr; supported by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Robert Penrose-FitzGerald, Mr. Grenfell, Captain Bagot, and Colonel Nolan; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 154] 663

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY] [5TH APRIL].

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

" That a sum not exceeding £10,101,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Resolution read a second time.

Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 664

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out '£10,101,000,' and insert '£10,100,900.' "—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, " That '£10,101,000' stand part of the said Resolution."

Mr. Griffith Boscawen (*Kent, Tunbridge*) 665
Colonel Blundell (*Lancashire, Ince*) 676
Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) 680
Major Evans Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 681
Sir A. Hayter (*Walsall*) 684
General Laurie (*Pembroke and Haverfordwest*) 689
Mr. Guest (*Plymouth*) 691
Mr. J. F. Hope (*Sheffield, Brightside*) 695
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 697
Mr. Abel Smith (*Hertfordshire, Hertford*) 700
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 701
Colonel Bowles (*Middlesex, Enfield*) 704
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (*Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield*) 706
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 707
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 709
Mr. Lyell (*Dorsetshire, E.*) 713
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 716
Captain Bagot (*Westmoreland, Kendal*) 719

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

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EVENING SITTING.

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill—[By Order]; Epping Gas Bill [By Order].—Read the third time, and passed 721

Great Eastern Railway Bill [By Order] (King's Consent Signified).—Read the third time, and passed 721

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill—[By Order]; Loughborough Corporation Bill [By Order]; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill [By Order]; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill [By Order].—Read the third time, and passed 721

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railway Bill [By Order].

The Deputy-Chairman (*Mr. Jeffreys, Hampshire, N.*) 721

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Resolution of the Select Committee on Standing Orders of 14th March in the case of the Petition of the Portadown Urban District Council praying to be heard against the said Bill be referred back to the Select Committee on Standing Orders with a view to consider whether, under the circumstances of the case, Standing Order 128 should be dispensed with in respect of the said Petition."—(*The Deputy-Chairman.*)

Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 722
Mr. Halsey (*Hertfordshire, Watford*) 722
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 722

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 104; Noes, 93. (Division List No. 104.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—[By Order]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (By Order]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill [By Order].—Read a second time a and committed 725

Supply (4th Allotted Day) [5th April] Report.

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [6th April] to Resolution, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out '£10,101,000,' and insert £10,100,900.' "—(*Mr. McCrae*).

Question again proposed, "That £10,101,000' stand part of the said Resolution."

Captain Bagot 725
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 724
Mr. Reginald Lucas (*Portsmouth*) 732

Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 733
Mr. Peel (*Manchester, S.*) 735
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) 737
Mr. Black (*Banffshire*) 749

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 209 ; Noes, 167. (Division List No. 105).

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, Mr. SPEAKER proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. SECRETARY ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put."

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 214 ; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 106.)

Question put accordingly, " That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided :—Ayes, 190 ; Noes, 146. (Division List No. 107.)

Army (Annual) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 761

Amendment proposed—

" In page 2, line 23, to leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out to the second word ' the,' in page 2, line 26, stand part of the clause."

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) .. 762
Mr. Churchill (*Oldham*) 763
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 766
Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Boroughs*) 766
Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 768
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 768
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 769
Mr. Churchill 770

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Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 772
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 773
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 774
Mr. Charles Hobhouse 774
Major Seely 776

Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 158 ; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 108.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the second word 'the,' in page 2, line 26, stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 158 ; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 109.)

Whereupon Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster moved, "That the Question 'That the Clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 150 ; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 110.)

Question put accordingly "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 154 ; Noes, 117. (Division List No. 111.)

Clause 3 :—

Mr. Sydney Buxton 789

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress ; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 791
Mr. McCrae 793
Mr. Joseph Walton 793
Mr. Lloyd-George 793
Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.) 796

Mr. A. J. Balfour rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 150 ; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 112.)

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress ; and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 112 ; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 113.)

Mr. Charles Hobhouse 803
Mr. O'Mara 803
Colonel Welby (Taunton) 805
Mr. Lloyd-George 806

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 11, to leave out the words 'the prices specified in the Schedule to this Act,' and insert the words 'reasonable prices.'"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Major Seely 807

Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 146 ; Noes, 105. (Division List No. 114.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided .—Ayes, 145 ; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 115.)

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 145 ; Noes, 100. (Division List No. 116.)

Whereupon Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER moved, "That the Question 'That the clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 145 ; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 117.)

Mr. Keir Hardie 819
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 820

A New Clause (Exhibition of abstract in recruiting stations),—(*Mr. Keir Hardie*),—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Mr. Arnold-Forster 822
Mr. J. A. Pease (*Essex, Saffron Walden*) 822
Mr. Joseph Walton 822

Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 141 ; Noes, 96. (Division List No. 118.)

Question put accordingly, "That the clause be read a second time."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 94 ; Noes, 141. (Division List No. 119.)

Mr. Lloyd-George 829

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Mr. A. J. Balfour 829
Mr. Charles Hobhouse 832

MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, 'That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 141; Noes, 96. (Division List No. 120.)

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 96; Noes, 141 .(Division List No. 121.)

Mr. Bright (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) 837
Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) 837

New Clause (Prohibition of corporal punishment)—(*Mr. Bright*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

The Financial Secretary to the War Office (*Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield*) 839
Mr. J. H. Lewis (*Flint Boroughs*) 840
The Attorney-General (*Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs*) 841
Mr. Joseph Walton 841
Mr. Lloyd-George 842
Colonel Welby 845
Mr. McKenna 846

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 89; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 122.)

Major Seely 849

New Clause (Prisons Act, 1898)—(*Major Seely*)—brought up, and read the first time

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Sir Robert Finlay 850
Mr. McKenna 850
Mr. Lloyd-George 851
Sir Robert Finlay 852
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 854
Mr. McKenna 854

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 87 ; Noes, 138. (Division List No. 123.)

Mr. McKenna .. 857
Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 857
Mr. McCrae .. 858
Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 858
Mr. Charles Hobhouse .. 858
Mr. Higham (*Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby*) .. 859

New Clause (Amendments of Section 4 of Army Act, 1881)—(*Mr. Higham*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 859
Mr. Charles Hobhouse .. 860
Major Seely .. 861
Mr. Swift MacNeill .. 862

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 77 ; Noes, 133. (Division List No. 124).

Mr. James O'Connor (*Wicklow, W.*) .. 863

Another New Clause (Punishment)—(*Mr. John O'Connor*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Sir Robert Findlay .. 866

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 82 ; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 125.)

Schedule :—

Mr. J. H. Lewis .. 867
Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 868
Mr. Keir Hardie .. 869
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) .. 870
Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 871
Mr. J. H. Lewis .. 871
Mr. Charles Hobhouse .. 872

Schedule agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at a quarter after Nine o'clock a.m.

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HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 7TH APRIL, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Morley Corporation.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 873

Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 873

Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.].—The order made on Tuesday the 7th of March last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged 873

Clacton-on-Sea Commissioners Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 873

Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed for Tuesday next 873

South Metropolitan Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed 873

Marylebone Chapels Bill [H.L.]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Clyde Navigation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 873

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 873

PETITIONS.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].—Petitions to be heard by counsel against; of Jewish Master Bakers' Association; Whitechapel and Spitalfields Costermonger and Street Sellers' Union; and persons signing; read, and referred to the Select Committee 874

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.—No. 3337. Nicaragua 874

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877.—Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the sixty-sixth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 874

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.—Account up to March 31st, 1905 874

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SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury minute, dated April 3rd, 1905, declaring that Alfred Richard Nightingale, assistant in the London Postal Service, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertance on the part of the head of his Department 874

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS), ENGLAND AND WALES.—Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended September 29th, 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 874

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.].—The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed, but no copies to be delivered out, except to members of the Committee and such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 42.) 874

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next 875

Continuation Schools Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Bishop of Hereford 875

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 880
The President of the Council and President of the Board of Education (The Marquess of Londonderry) 884
The Marquess of Ripon 888
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 889

On Question, their Lordships divided :—Contents, 14; Not contents, 16.

THE QUADRANT OF REGENT STREET.

Viscount Ridley 891
The First Commissioner of Works (Lord Windsor) 892

THE IMPERIAL YEOMANRY COMMITTEE'S ACCOUNTS.

Lord Harris 893
The Under Secretary of State for War (The Earl of Donoughmore) .. 899
Lord Shuttleworth 902

Advertisements Regulation Bill.—Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived.
Bill recommitted to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended. (No. 43) 904

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend Section 82 of the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882. Was presented by the Lord Chancellor read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 44) 905

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, FRIDAY, 7TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 905

Croydon Gas Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time .. 905

Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 905

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).—Sir JOSEPH LEESE reported from the Committee on Group G of Private Bills ; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at a quarter-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table 906

Street Betting Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 155] 906

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to amend the Law relating to the Area of Service of the Regular Militia when embodied." [Service of Militiamen Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to confirm a scheme made by a Committee of the Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council under the Municipal Corporation Acts 1882 and 1885, relating to Merthyr Tydfil." [Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to provide for the sale of the Chapel of Saint Paul, Great Portland Street, and for the endowment of the Chapel of Saint Peter, Vere Street, in the event of that Chapel having a district assigned to it ; and for other purposes connected therewith." [Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction of the tramways and works authorised by the Mexborougu and Swinton Tramways Act, 1902, and the Rawmarsh Urban District Council (Tramways) Act, 1900 ; and for other purposes." [Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to transfer the Renfrew Harbour Undertaking to the Trustees of the Clyde Navigation ; to abandon the works authorised by The Renfrew Burgh and Harbour Extension Act, 1899 ; and for other purposes." [Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords] 906

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Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 156.] 907

Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 907

Aberdare Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 907

PETITIONS.

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Perth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 907

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Dunoon, in favour; to lie upon the Table 907

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Exeter; Holbeck; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table 907

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against; from Barnes; Battersea; Berkhampstead; Bexley; Bollington; Bosworth; Brighton (four); Buckhurst Hill; Charlton; Chelmsford; Derby; Edinburgh (two); Gainsborough; Garboldisham; Guildford; Harrow Green; Hatfield; Hove (two); Ilfracombe; Kennington; Melbourne; Monmouth; Oxford; Parkstone; Saffron Walden; St. Giles; St. Pancras; Sydenham; Wimborne; and Woodeaton; to lie upon the Table 907

Sugar Tax.—Petition from Leeds, for repeal; to lie upon the Table 907

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition from Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table 907

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Police (Counties and Boroughs, England and Wales).—Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117] 908

Prisons (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-sixth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 908

Superannuation Act, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 3rd April, 1905, declaring that Alfred Richard Nightingale, Assistant in the London Postal Service, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 908

Greek Loan of 1898.—Account presented, up to 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 908

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series No. 3337 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 908

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SCOTCH EX-ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RECEIPT OF PENSIONS.—Questions, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson .. 908

ENGLISH AND WELSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RECEIPT OF PENSIONS.—Question. Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Sir William Anson 909

UNDERFED SCHOOL CHILDREN AT LEEDS.—Questions, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, Sir William Anson and Mr. Gerald Balfour 909

CONDITION OF ENGINES AND BOILER TUBES OF H.M.S. "Latona."—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 910

REMOVAL OF RAILINGS IN GREEN PARK.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Lord Balcarres 911

QUARTERLY RETURN OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—SUGGESTED ISSUE AS PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 911

SALARIES OF IRISH SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Dr. Macnama; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 912

IRISH EX-TEACHERS IN RECEIPT OF PENSIONS.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 912

DUNDRUM CENTRAL ASYLUM—REGULATIONS REGARDING LETTERS WRITTEN BY PATIENTS.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Walter Long .. 913

MR. YOUNG'S ESTATE, CULDAFF, INNISHOWEN.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 913

ARMY—NUMBER OF RECRUITS.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 914

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Colonel Denny (*Kilmarnock Burghs*) 914

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Griffith Boscawen (*Kent, Tunbridge*) 918
Sir Ernest Flower (*Bradford, W.*) 923

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day fortnight.'"—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir Brampton Gurdon (*Norfolk, N.*) 925
Mr. Cripps (*Lancashire, Stretford*) 927
Mr. Eugene Wason (*Clackmannan and Kinross*) 931

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Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) .. 932
Mr. Slack (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) .. 933
Colonel Welby (Taunton) .. 937
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) .. 939

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 149 ; Noes, 64. (Division List No 126.)

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Colonel Denny*).

Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) .. 947
Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) .. 948
Mr. Talbot (Oxford University) .. 949
Mr. Churchill (Oldham) .. 948
Sir Brampton Gurdon .. 951
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) .. 951
Mr. Seely (Lincoln) .. 953
Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, W.) .. 953
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) .. 953
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) .. 954
Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) .. 954
Major Jameson (Clare, W.) .. 955

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 149 ; Noes, 84. (Division List No. 127.)

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Drunkenness (Ireland) Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill now be read a second time."

Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) .. 959
Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.) .. 959
Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) .. 959

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Coal Mines Employment Bill.—Considered in Committee ; Committee report progress ; to sit again upon Monday next .. 960

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn."

Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.) .. 960
The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) .. 960

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

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HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 10TH APRIL, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to dissolve the marriage of Jane Sarah Victoria Lautour, of Ansty House, Erdington, in the county of Warwick, with Ernest Lautour, her husband, and to enable her to marry again, and for other purposes. Presented (on Petition), and a copy of the proceedings in and of the Decree of Divorce of the King's Bench, Matrimonial Division, of the High Court of Justice in Ireland. Delivered (on oath). Bill read 1ª .. 961

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Petition of Jane Sarah Victoria Lautour, praying that substituted service of a copy of the Bill, and of the Order for the Second Reading thereof, and of all other Orders connected therewith, be made upon Mr. Frank W. Faulkner, of 7, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, solicitor; read. Ordered, That the said Petition be considered to-morrow 961

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Accrington Corporation; Accrington District Gas and Water Board; South Suburban Gas; Wrexham Gas. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 961

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments .. 961

Sheffield University Bill [H.L.].—Committee to meet To-morrow 961

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—A witness to attend on the hearing of the Petition for substituted service 961

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Truro Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 961

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.].—The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, Chairman of the Select Committee, informed the House, That the Lord Romilly was unable, on account of illness, to continue his attendance on Thursday and Friday last and this day, and that the Committee continued sitting on those days in the absence of the Lord Romilly, all parties having consented thereto; read, and agreed to .. 962

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]; University College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Yarborough be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee in the place of the Lord Castlemaine; read, and agreed to 962

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.]; East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Charing Cross and Strand Electricity Supply Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow 962

City of London Electric Lighting Company Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Various Powers) Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Central Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; County of London Electric Supply Company Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow 962

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed 962

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.—No. 3338. Italy (Finances). 963

INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL COMMITTEE.—Report of the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 963

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).—Accounts of the Metropolitan gas companies for the year 1904 963

POLLING DISTRICTS (CITY OF MANCHESTER).—Order made by the council of the city of Manchester dividing the Parliamentary borough of Manchester into polling districts 963

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury minute, dated 4th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to William H. Wood, Engineer-in-Chief's Department, General Post Office, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 963

Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks (Registration of Patents Agents) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2 (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 963

THE EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA.

The Under Secretary of State for India (*The Marquess of Bath*) 964

THE BALLASTING OF MERCHANT SHIPS.

Lord Muskerry 965
Lord Wolverton 967
Earl Spencer 968

Patents Designs, and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Coleridge 969

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Coleridge.*)

Lord Wolverton 971

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

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COLONIAL GOVERNORS.

Lord Monk Bretton 971
The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 977
The Earl Aberdeen 981
The Marquess of Ripon 983
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 983

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 10TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 985

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 985

Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill. Read the third time and passed 859

Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title] 985

Great Northern Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 985

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 985

London Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed 985

Otley Improvement Bill.—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title] .. 986

Seaham Gas Bill; Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill. Read the third time, and passed 986

North Sussex Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 986

Woolwich Borough Council Bill.—As amended, to be considered To-morrow 986

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed 986

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed. 986

PETITIONS.

Land Values (Taxation).—Petition from Pembroke, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 986

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; from Anniesland; Biggar; and Buckie; to lie upon the Table 986

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against; from Chippenham; Hammersmith; and Poplar; to lie upon the table .. 986

Rating of Machinery Bill.—Petition from Sheffield, against; to lie upon the Table 986

Shipowners' Negligence (Remedies) Bill.—Petition from the Scottish Trade Protection Society, in favour; to lie upon the Table 986

Trade Marks Bill.—Petition from the Scottish Trade Protection Society, in favour to lie upon the Table 986

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Polling Districts (City of Manchester).—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the City of Manchester dividing the Parliamentary Borough of Manchester into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table .. 987

Irish Land Commission (Estates Commissioners).—Copy presented, of Report of the Estates Commissioners for the period from 1st November, 1903, to 31st December, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.. 987

Commission of the Peace (Ireland).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; *Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118.] 987

Industrial Alcohol Committee.—Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 987

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th April, 1905, granting to William H. Wood, Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 987

Coal Imports (France).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th March; *Sir Thomas Wrightson*]; to lie upon the Table 987

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Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copy presented, of Dipomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3338 [by Command] to lie upon the Table 987

Financial Statement (1905–6).—Copy ordered, of "Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish*).

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119] 987

Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers) Bill.—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum explanatory of the Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers) Bill."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 102] 987

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"And also of the number of such Appeals submitted for the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council during the six years ending the 31st day of December, 1904, giving the number in each year separately, and showing how many were forwarded to the Secretary of State for orders and how many were withheld in India, and how these statistics compared with the corresponding figures for the six years ending the 31st day of December, 1898."—(*Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree*) 988

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CHILDRENS COURTS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1008

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Royal Irish Constabulary—Names in Irish on Carts.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1032

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Aghalee Postal Arrangements.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin; Answer, Lord Stanley 1035

Killarney—Rail and Hotel Tickets.—Question, Mr. Murphy; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1035

Treatment of Native Races.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.) Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1036

Scotch Education Bill.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1036

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Management of Queen Anne's Bounty and the Ecclesiastical Commission.—Question, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1037

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Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1038

Scottish Church Dispute.—Questions, Mr. Wallace (Perth) and Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1038

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London Rates.—Questions, Mr. Benn (Devonport), and Sir George Bartley; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1040

Education (Provision of Meals) Bill.—Order for Second Reading Tomorrow read, and discharged.
Bill withdrawn 1010

NEW BILLS.

Mortgage of Premises Bill.—"To amend the Law in regard to the Mortgaging of Premises containing trade machinery," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 157] 1041

Bills of Exchange Bill.—"To provide for the registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange, and to allow summary judgment thereon," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 158] .. 1041

Infectious Diseases (Ireland) Bill—" To make further provision towards the prevention of Infectious Diseases in Ireland, presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 159] 1041

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS).—Motion made, and Question put, " That the Proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Twelve o'Clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 235; Noes, 181. (Division List No. 128) .. 1041

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 1045

Motion made and Question proposed, " That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest of any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for for the National Debt."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 1068
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 1070
Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1073
Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 1074
Sir Edgar Vincent (*Exeter*) 1081
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 1084
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1087
Mr. Ashton (*Bedfordshire, Luton*) 1092
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 1096
Sir William Holland (*Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham*) 1100
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 1102
Mr. Whittaker (*Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley*) 1104

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

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EXCHEQUER BONDS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding £10,000,000 be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000. That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 1108
Mr. Coghill (*Stoke-upon-Trent*) 1114
Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 1116
Mr. Scott-Montagu (*Hampshire, New Forest*) 1119
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 1120
Mr. Charles McArthur (*Liverpool, Exchange*) 1123
Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 1124
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 1128
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1131
Mr. Shackleton (*Lancashire, Clitheroe*) 1145

Question put, and agreed to.

1. Resolved, "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding £10,000,000 be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new Sinking Fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000. That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."—(*Mr. Chancellor af the Exchequer.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 175; Noes, 106. (Division List No. 129.)

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question put, " That the additional Excise duties on bee. and spirits imposed by Sections 6 and 7 of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July nineteen hundred and six."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 171 ; Noes, 97. (Division List No. 130.)

AMENDMENT OF THE LAW.—Resolved, " That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow ; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported ; as amended, to be considered to-morrow . 1155

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 1155
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 1156
Sir A. Acland-Hood 1156

Question put, and agreed to.

POWER BRAKES ON RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES.—Return ordered, in the following form—

Railway Company.	Total Number.		Total number used exclusively for shunting purposes.		Number fitted with Power Brakes.	
	Engines.	Tenders.	Engines.	Tenders.	Engines.	Tenders.

—(*Mr. Bell.*) 1156

Adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : TUESDAY, 11TH APRIL, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Worcestershire County Council Bridges.

And that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) ; Chelsea Electricity Supply ; Epping Gas ; Great Eastern Railway ; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water ; Loughborough Corporation ; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society ; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply ; Darien Gold Mining Company [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1157

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Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1157

Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.].—Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill; East Cowes Gas Bill [H.L.]; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield University Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 1157

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill.—Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Reported, without Amendment 1157

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.].—East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Charing Cross and Strand Electricity Supply Corporation Bill [H.L.]; City of London Electric Lighting Company Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Various Powers) Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Central Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; County of London Electric Supply Company Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again till Tuesday the 9th of May next 1157

Morley Corporation Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1158

Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed 1158

Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [H.L.].—Varry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1158

Acton Sewage Bill.—Birmingham Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill; London Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill; Otley Improvement Bill; Seaham Gas Bill; Sutherland and South Shields Water Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners 1158

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill [H.L.].—Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Bridgwater Canals Bill [H.L.]; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Monk Bretton be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Clements (*E. Leitrim*); read, and agreed to 1158

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour of; of residents in Nottingham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1158

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].—Petitions in favour of; of Lodges of Good Templars (2); residents of Gloucester and Cheltenham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1159

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.—No. 446. St. Vincent (Report for 1903–1904). Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1159

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Licence granted by His Majesty to James Smith, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 1159

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.—Annual account of receipts and payments in respect of the capital and income of the above fund, for the period to 31st December, 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1159

ARMY.—Return respecting. Laid before the House (pursuant to Address of the 31st of March last), and to be printed. (No. 45.) 1159

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being suspended for that day's sitting .. 1159

COLONIES (PROPOSED COLONIAL CONFERENCE).—

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1159

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary that before the constituencies of the country are asked to determine upon the desirability of a Colonial Conference they should be informed (1) under what conditions the conference will be summoned; (2) what Colonies and Dependencies will be invited to send representatives; and (3) how far any decision arrived at will be held as binding upon His Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom."—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 1170
Earl Beauchamp 1176
Viscount Ridley 1184
The Earl of Lytton 1187
The Earl of Crewe 1195
The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (*Lord Ashbourne*) 1201
Lord Burghclere 1203
Lord Stanley of Alderley 1208
The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 1214
Lord James of Hereford 1218
Earl Spencer 1226
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1228
Viscount Goschen 1235
The Earl of Rosebery 1240

On Question; resolved in the negative.

House adjourned at ten minutes past Eleven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 11TH APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords] (Standing Orders not previously inquired into Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Hessle Gas Bill ([Lords]; Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time. 1244

Substituted Bills [Lords] (Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Complied with.—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced in accordance with the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. —Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1245

Croydon Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1245

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1245

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Read a second time; and committed .. 1245

Woolwich Borough Council Bill (by order).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1245

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bury (Rural); Conway; Goldborne; Haydock; Hipperholme; Little Lever; Southall-Norwood; Spalding; Whitwood; and Whitworth;" presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 160] .. 1245

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts 1882 and 1888, relating to Ballaghaderreen;" presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 161] 1245

Halifax Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A.]. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1245

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Stockport Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1245

Bristol Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1245

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee;

1. "That, in the case of the Worcestershire County Council (Bridges), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill.

2. "That, in the case of the Levens Patent Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill.

3. "That, in the case of the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Portadown Urban District Council,' against the Bill, re-committed Resolution of the 6th day of April, referred to the said Select Committee with a view to consider whether, under the circumstances of the case, Standing Order 128 should be dispensed with in respect of the said Petition, the said Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First two Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table 1245

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled "An Act to extend the periods prescribed by the scheme of arrangement relating to the Mortgage Insurance Corporation Limited, for the liquidation of their affairs; and for other purposes." [Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to effect a fusion of the undertaking of the Hand-in-Hand Fire and Life Insurance Society with that of the Commercial Union Assurance Company, Limited; and for other purposes." [Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Urban District Council of Clacton in regard to the Seashore Recreation Grounds and other matters; and to make further and better provisions in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of their district: and for other purposes." [Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Truro Water Company to construct additional waterworks, acquire lands, and raise further moneys; and for other purposes." [Truro Water Bill [Lords.] .. 1246

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [LORDS].—Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]; Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Truro Water Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1247

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PETITIONS.

HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY.—Petition from Glasgow, against isolation from the other regiments of the Highland Brigade; to lie upon the Table 1247

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Bellshill; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Perth; and Troon; to lie upon the Table 1247

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Clevedon; Folkestone; Holyhead; Kingston-on-Thames; Lewisham; Lincoln; and North Kensington; to lie upon the Table 1247

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COAL IMPORTS (FRANCE).—Return [presented 10th April] to be printed. [No. 121] 1248

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of a Licence granted to James Smith, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1248

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 446 (St. Vincent) Annual Report for 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1248

EAST INDIA) TRADE).—Copy presented, of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1899–1900 to 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1248

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.—Annual Accounts presented, of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st December, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1248

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1248

RAILWAY RATES FOR CARRIAGE OF FISH FROM NORTH OF SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1249

PORT NESS HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1249

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN OF TINKER FAMILIES IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1249

WAVENEY SCHOOL, BALLYMENA.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1250

REBUILDING OF GUY'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, BALLYMENA—APPROVAL OF SITE.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1251

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DISCOVERY OF SMOKELESS COAL IN BRITISH NORTH BORNEO.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1253

COTTON CULTIVATION IN BRITISH NORTH BORNEO.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1253

IMPROVED MAIL SERVICE AT MILLPORT AND KILCHATTAN BAY.—Question, Mr. Lamont (Buteshire); Answer, Lord Stanley 1253

PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT POSTMEN.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1254

ALTACARRY HEAD LIGHTHOUSE, RATHLIN ISLAND.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1254

FRENCH IMPORT DUTIES ON HAMS.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1255

SALE OF THE "BOADICEA."—Question, Mr. J. H. Lewis (Flint Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1256

ISSUE OF ANNUITIES FOR PAYMENT FOR ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER IN NAVAL ESTABLISHMENTS.—Question, Mr. Ashton (Bedfordshire, Luton); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1256

INCOME TAX ABATEMENTS.—Question, Mr. J. H. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1256

IMPERIAL REVENUE—CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXATION.—Question, Mr. Mount (Berkshire, Newbury); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1256

FRENCH DUTIES ON BRITISH AND INDIAN SILK AND JUTE GOODS.—Question, Mr. Runciman; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1257

SENTENCE ON J. R. SULLIVAN, OF MILLSTREET, COUNTY CORK.—Questions, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) and Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long 1257

CALDBECK ESTATE, QUEEN'S COUNTY.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1258

RIFLE MANUFACTURE—COST OF INSPECTION.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Bromley Davenport 1259

CIVILIAN CHAPLAIN SERVING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Bromley Davenport 1259

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

ADMIRALTY SALES OF BLUE SERGES.—Question, Mr. Barran (Leeds, N.) and Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) and Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham) .. 1260

COST OF THE INFANTRY SOLDIER.—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1260

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STATUS OF VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1261

THE REDUCTION OF THE VOLUNTEER FORCE.—Questions, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central) and Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1261

ARMY SERGE.—Question, Mr. Barran; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 1262

COST OF MACHINE GUNS.—Questions, Mr. Higham (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby); Answers, Mr. Bromley Davenport 1263

ZIONISTS' EXPEDITION AGAINST THE NANDI.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1263

CHINESE COOLIE STRIKE AT THE NORTH RANDFONTEIN MINE.—Questions, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.), Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) and Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1263

TRANSVAAL PROFIT TAX.—Question, Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1266

EXPORT OF OLD HORSES TO THE CONTINENT.—Question, Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1267

IMPRISONMENT FOR NON-PAYMENT OF FINES—CASE OF JOSEPH WRIGHT.—Questions, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.) and Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1267

"PASSIVE RESISTERS"—THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL AND THE TIBENHAM POSTMASTER.—Question, Mr. Soames (Norfolk, S.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1269

THE AUSTRALIAN MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Runciman; Answer, Lord Stanley 1269

ALLOTMENTS.—Question, Mr. Jesse Collings (Birmingham, Bordesley); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1269

BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND UNDERFED SCHOOL CHILDREN.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1270

MILLPORT AND KILCHATTAN BAY RAILWAY SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Lamont; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1270

BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION—BRITISH APPEAL TO THE PERMANENT COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 1271

ANNUAL ACCOUNT, NATIONAL DEBT (SAVINGS BANK AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES).—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1271

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SCHOOL TEACHERS' DUTIES TO UNDERFED CHILDREN.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1272

LORD PROVOST OF PERTH—QUESTIONS OF PRECEDENCE.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1272

PROCURATORS-FISCAL AND COST OF OUTSIDE MEDICAL OPINION.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1273

OUTDOOR RELIEF TO WIDOWS.—Question, Mr. Finday (Lanarkshire, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1273

LORD KENMARE'S KERRY ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1273

CAHIRCIVEEN HOSIERY INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1274

DENNEHY ESTATE GLENCAR.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1274

KERRY TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION SCHEMES.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1275

KERRY AND THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.—Questions, Mr. Murphy and Mr. J. O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1276

STEAMER SERVICE ON THE SOUTH WEST COAST OF IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1276

KERRY EVICTED TENANTS.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1276

LAND PURCHASE IN SOUTH CORK.—Question, Mr. Edward Barry (Cork County, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1277

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.), Mr. Gretton (Derbyshire, S.), Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long .. 1279

COLDBECH ESTATE, QUEEN'S COUNTY.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1279

IRISH POSTMASTERS AS EMIGRATION AGENTS.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1280

DEFENCE AGAINST INVASION.—Question, Colonel Welby (Taunton); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1280

THE IRISH VICEROYALTY.—Question, Mr. Coghill (Stoke-upon-Trent); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1281

REDISTRIBUTION PROPOSALS.—Questions, Mr. Coghill and Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1281

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Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals) Bill.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 122.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 162.] 1282

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Tennant.

Report to lie upon the Table 1282

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from serving on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Trades Unions and Trade Disputes Bill: Mr. Jordan and Mr. Clancy; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Hayden and Mr. Nannetti.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had appointed Mr. Charles Craig a Member of the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1283

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect of the Drunkenness (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Conor O'Kelly, Mr. Hugh Law, Sir James Haslett, Captain Donelan, Mr. Wood, Mr. Sloan, Mr. O'Dowd, Mr. Crean, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. Thomas Lorimer Corbett, Mr. John Gordon, and Mr. William Moore.

Report to lie upon the Table. 1283

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill:—Colonel Lockwood, Colonel Denny, Sir Gilbert Parker, Sir William Brampton Gurdon Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. David MacIver, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Talbot, Lord Edmund Talbot, Mr. Boscawen, Mr. Malcolm, Colonel Welby, Mr. Mount, and Mr. Worsley-Taylor.

Report to lie upon the Table 1283

Military Manœuvres Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 163] 1283

Reserve Forces Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 164] 1284

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Service of Militiamen Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 165] 1284

Seamen's and Soldiers' False Characters Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 166] .. 1284

Elementary Education (Feeding of Children) Bill.—Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1284

NEW BILLS.

Highways Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Highways," presented by Mr. Henry Hobhouse; supported by Sir John Dorington, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Bill, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 5th, and to be printed. [Bill 167] 1284

Education Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903," presented by Mr. Lambert; supported by Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Eve, and Sir Edgar Vincent; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 12th, and to be printed. [Bill 168] 1284

Land Tenure Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land," presented by Mr. Lambert; supported by Mr. Eve, Mr. Soares, Mr. Charles Allen, Mr. Fletcher Moulton, and Mr. Edwards; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 12th, and to be printed. [Bill 169] 1284

Local Government (Scotland) Bill.—"To make further provision for Local Government in Scotland; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Maxwell; to be read a second time upon Monday, May 8th, and to be printed. [Bill 170] 1285

Ways and Means.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Tea.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That there shall be charged on and after the first day of July, nineteen hundred and five, until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six, the following Customs Import duty on tea (that is to say)—'Tea, the pound, sixpence.'"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 1283
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 1285
Mr. Wylie (*Dumbartonshire*) 1297
Mr. Rea (*Gloucester*) 1297
Mr. Cohen (*Islington, E.*) 1299
Mr. Harwood (*Bolton*) 1302
Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (*Lincolnshire, Gainsborough*) 1303
Mr. Helme (*Lancashire, Lancaster*) 1305
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 1306
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 1312

Amendment proposed—

"In line 5, to leave out the words 'six pence,' and insert the words 'four pence.'"—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'six pence' stand part of the proposed Resolution."

Mr. Higham (*Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby*) 1316
M. Brigg (*Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley*) 1317
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 1317
Mr. Cawley (*Lancashire, Prestwick*) 1318
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1319

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 249 ; Noes, 184. (Division List No. 131.)

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Cawley 1325
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1326
Mr. Theodore Taylor (*Lancashire, Radcliffe*) 1329
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1332
Mr. O'Mara (*Kilkenny, S.*) 1334
Mr. George Whiteley (*Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 1335
Mr. Alexander Cross (*Glasgow, Camlachie*) 1336

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 247 ; Noes, 168. (Division List No. 132.)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow to the House.

Committee to sit again to-morrow.

Sitting suspended at 7.28.

EVENING SITTING.

Hitchin and District Gas Bill [BY ORDER].—As amended, considered.

Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 1341
Mr. Hudson (*Hertfordshire, Hitchin*) 1341

Bill to be read the third time.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS' PENSION FUND.

Mr. Hammond (*Carlow*) 1342
Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (*Kerry, W.*) 1343

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in consequence of the conflicting Reports of the Government Actuary on the Pension Fund of the National School Teachers of Ireland, the losses incurred in the management of this Fund, the reduction in the Pensions of this important and deserving body of public servants, and the anxiety as to the solvency of the Fund, upon which even their reduced and wholly inadequate superannuations depend, it is the opinion of this House that the Government should at once secure its solvency by making towards the Fund a grant from Imperial sources, as is done in respect of the Teachers of British Primary Schools, subject the Fund to more efficient management, and at the forthcoming quinquennial examination permit the Teachers, who are at once contributors to and sole beneficiaries of the Fund, to be represented by an independent actuary."—(*Mr. Hammond.*)

Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.) 1349
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 1351
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 1357
The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1361
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1363
Mr. Gordon (Londonderry, N.) 1364
The Solicitor-General for Ireland (Mr. James Campbell, Dublin University) 1365

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 113 ; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 133.)

UNEMPLOYED RELIEF (WORK) (LONDON).—Return ordered, " showing, in respect of the Common Council of the City of London, and each of the Metropolitan Borough Councils, the amount expended in wages for work undertaken specially for the purpose of providing work for unemployed workmen during the six months ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, distinguishing the proportion of such expenditure which was met out of (a) local rates, (b) voluntary subscriptions received by the council, and (c) contributions by the Central Unemployed Committee, and specifying the nature of the work undertaken, the number of men employed thereon in each month, the rate of pay given, the period for which the work, or each kind of work, if more than one kind was undertaken, lasted, and the average number of days' work allowed each man ; also, showing the estimated amount which would have been paid in wages if the work had been carried out under ordinary conditions."—(*Mr. Whitmore.*) 1371

EDUCATION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That there be laid before this House a Return relating to Education for England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1905, in the following form :—

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Elementary Education, total State grant for day schools for year ended March, 1905			
2. Cost of administration and inspection			
3. Pupils on roll			
4. Average daily attendance			
5. Cost per pupil in average daily attendance			
6. Number of schools			
7. Number of certificated teachers			
8. Average salary of teachers			
9. Total rates and voluntary contributions			
10. Total State grant for Secondary Education			
11. Number of pupils in average attendance			
12. Cost per pupil to State			
13. Total State grants for Universities and Colleges			
14. Total number of pupils			
15. Average cost per student to State			
16. Total grants for all purposes from State			
17. Average per head of population			

—(*Mr. Thomas O'Donnell.*)

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1373
Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.) 1373
The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1373
Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) 1374
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 1374
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 1375
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 1376

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 112 ; Noes, 124. (Division List No. 134.)

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill.—As amended considered ; Bill read the third time, and passed 1377

Adjournment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House do now adjourn." —(*Sir A. Acland Hood.*)

Mr. Mooney (Dublin Co., S.) 1377
Mr. Ellis Griffith (Anglesey) 1378
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 1378
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 1379
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington) 1380

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 12th APRIL, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed 1381

Caledonian Railway Bill [By Order).—Read a second time, and committed 1381

PETITIONS.

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour ; from Cathcart ; and Maryhill ; to lie upon the Table 1381

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour ; from Carluke ; Edinburgh ; Glasgow ; Law ; and Stranraer ; to lie upon the Table 1381

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.—Petition from Kensington in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1381

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petitions against ; from Chester ; Dorchester ; Edinburgh (three) ; Leigh on Sea ; Tamworth ; and Westcliff and Southend ; to lie upon the Table 1381

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.—Account [presented April 11th] to be printed. [No. 123.] 1382

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).—Copy presented, of Fifteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1382

AUSTRALIA.—Copy presented, of Despatch from the Governor-General of Australia on the subject of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, and the Reply thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1382

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.—Copy presented, of Twenty-third Report of the Royal Universty of Ireland, being for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1382

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered February 15th; *Lord Stanley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.] .. 1382

TRAINING COLLEGES (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "showing the total cost to the State of the following Training Colleges, for the five years ended the 31st day of December, 1904:—

	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
Kildare Place, Dublin...					
Drumcondra, Dublin					
Baggot Street, Dublin					
Waterford Training College					
Belfast Female Training College					
Limerick Female Training College					

—(*Mr. Sloan*) 1382

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) COMMISSIONERS (MEETINGS, ETC.).—Return ordered, "of the number of Meetings held by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland in each of the five years ending the 31st day of December, 1904; and the name and number of attendances of each Commissioner in each of these five years."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*) 1383

TAXES AND IMPOSTS.

Return ordered, "showing (1) the Rates of Duties, Taxes, or Imposts collected by Imperial Officers; (2) the Quantities or Amounts taxed; (3) the Gross Receipts derived from each Duty; and (4) the Net Receipts and Appropriations thereof in the year ending the 31st day of March, 1905; and (1) the aggregate Gross Receipts derived from all such Duties, Taxes, or

Imposts, under the principal heads of Revenue; (2) the aggregate Net Receipts; (3) the Charges of Collection; and (4) the Produce, after deducting these Charges, on each of the ten years ending the 31st day of March, 1905."

"And, Notes to show any changes in the Taxes, Duties, and Imposts consequent upon the acceptance of the Budget Proposals of 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 317 of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Goddard.*) 1383

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East Cork Quarter Sessions.—Question, Capt. Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1403

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Business of the House—Proposed Vote of Censure.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central), and Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1412

The Easter Holidays.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1414

NEW BILLS.

Old Age Pensions Bill.—"To provide Pensions for Persons over sixty-five years of age," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir Hardie, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 171.] 1414

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities Bill).—"To amend the law relating to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Schwann; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 172.] 1414

Vaccination Prosecutions Bill.—"To provide that no Prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 173.] 1414

Ways and Means.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Income-Tax Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Income-Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and five, at the rate of one shilling in the pound."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.) 1415

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, to leave out the words 'one shilling,' and insert the words 'eleven pence.'"—(*Mr. McKenna*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'one shilling' stand part of the proposed Resolution."

Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) 1417
Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.) 1418
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1421
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1425

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 219; Noes, 166. (Division List No. 135.)

MAIN QUESTIONS AGAIN PROPOSED.

Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1431
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 1437
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 1440
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) 1441
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 1443
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1445
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1450
Sir John Rolleston (Leicester) 1454
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 1457
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1459
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 1467
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland) 1469
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1471
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1472

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, that Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and five, at the rate of one shilling in the pound.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS [10TH APRIL.]

Resolutions reported.

EXCHEQUER BONDS.

"That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding ten million pounds be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be twenty-eight million pounds.

"That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principle of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.—"That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections two, three, four, and five of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.—"That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by Sections six and seven of the Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.—"That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1475
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1475
Mr. Courtney Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1475
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1476
Mr. Whitley 1476
Mr. McCrae 1476

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1477

Question put, and agreed to

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Further consideration of subsequent Resolutions deferred till To-morrow.

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EVENING SITTING.

Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill [By Order].

Mr. Lonsdale (*Armagh, Mid.*) 1477
Mr. Sloan (*Belfast, S.*) 1481

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to omit Clause 33 of the Bill."—(*Mr. Lonsdale.*)

Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1481
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 1482

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned;"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Home Rule.

Mr. Tuff (*Rochester*) 1480
Sir Walter Plummer (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 1494

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the conflicting statements which have been made by the various Leaders of the Opposition on the subject of Home Rule, it is expedient that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs, should explicitly declare whether or not it is his intention to recommend to the electors of the United Kingdom the policy of establishing a Parliament in Ireland."—(*Mr. Tuff.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 1497
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1507
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1513

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Army (Annual) Bill [Third Reading].—Order for the Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Mr. Bright (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) 1517
Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) 1521

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'now read the third time' and add the words 'recommitted in respect of a new clause' (Prohibition of corporal punishment)."—(*Mr. Bright.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, N.) .. 1522
Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) 1525
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 1526
Colonel Blundell (Lancashire Ince) 1528
Mr. J. A. Pease (Essex, Saffron Walden) 1528
Colonel. Sandys (Lancashire, Bootle) 1529
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 1530
Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 1532

Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 171 ; Noes, 106. (Division List No. 136.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 171 ; Noes, 105. (Division List No. 137.)

Whereupon Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER claimed, "That the Main Question be now put."

Main Question put accordingly.

The House divided :—Ayes, 169 ; Noes, 100. (Division List No. 138.)

Bill read the third time, and passed.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at four minutes before Two o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CXLIV.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION)

IN THE

SIXTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
FIFTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 31*st March*, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to remove doubts as to the validity of a certain decree, dated 22nd November, 1892, of the High Court of Justice (Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division), dissolving the marriage solemnised on the 11th July, 1872, between John Richard Malone and Charlotte Mildred Malone, then Charlotte Mildred Yarde-Buller, spinster, and to confirm the said decree. Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday); and read 1ª.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]. Petition of John Richard Malone, of Baronston, in the county of Westmeath, Deputy-Lieutenant, late Colonel in the Westmeath Militia, praying that substituted service of a copy of the Bill and of the order for the Second Reading thereof, and of all other orders in connection therewith upon Messrs. Payne, Shaw-Mackenzie, and Lake, solicitors, of No. 11, New Square, Lincoln's Inn, in the county of London, and by forwarding copies by registered letter, addressed to Mrs. M. Buller, No. 4, Rue de Seze, Paris, be deemed as good service of the said Bill and orders as if the same had been personally served upon Charlotte Mildred Malone. Presented and read, and to be considered on Monday next.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next; and to be printed as amended. (No. 40.)

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill; South Metropolitan Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]; University College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.) :—

E. Westmeath,
L. Clements (*E. Leitrim*),
L. Barnard (chairman),
L. Castlemaine,
L. Lyveden;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday the 11th of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Hythe Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Mansfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; London Squares and Enclosures (Preservation) Bill [H.L.]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.) :—

E. Verulam,
E. Dartrey (chairman),
L. Oranmore and Browne,
L. Shute (*V. Barrington*),
L. Estcourt;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday the 11th of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of February 1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Order in Council of the 27th March, 1905, relating to seamen's lodging-houses in the county borough of Salford.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875.

Order in Council of the 27th March, 1905, providing that picric acid and picrates and mixtures of picric acid shall be deemed to be explosives within the meaning of the Act, with certain exceptions.

PUBLIC RECORDS (OFFICE OF HIS MAJESTY'S WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES).

Second Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents in the Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE EASTER HOLIDAYS.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I beg to ask the Lord Chancellor, in the absence of the noble Marquess who leads this House, what arrangements it is proposed to make with regard to the Easter holidays.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I have had a communication from the noble Marquess, who suggests that the House should sit until April 14th in the ordinary course for ordinary business. There may, however, be some difficulty in adjourning the House on that date by reason of the Army Bill, which must be passed before the end of April. Therefore, if it were understood that no contentious business would be taken after April 14th, the House would sit formally for the necessity I have indicated, after which the proposal is that we should adjourn over the holidays until May 8th.

NINE YEARS ENLISTMENT.

*Viscount HAMPDEN: My Lords, I rise, in accordance with the notice standing in my name on the Paper, to move for a Return of the ages of the men enlisted into the infantry of the Line under the new nine-years regulation up to March 31st, 1905. The object of this Return, which I have reason to believe will be granted by His Majesty's Government, is to secure information as to the effect on the Reserve of the Army of the long-service regulation. This is a serious matter, because the maintenance of a strong and efficient Reserve is necessary to this country, more especially having regard to the defence of India. A simple sum in arithmetic will show very clearly that if you reduce the Reserve service you must diminish the Army Reserve, and, further, if you enlist the same class of recruits as to age as you are enlisting now you will not get any advantages corresponding to the disadvantages you will suffer. Apart from the long-service regulation, you are proposing, as I understand it, to have a short-service system. I do not think it is arguable that a Reserve force composed of men of two years service and no fighting experience at all will be in any way equal to a Reserve force composed of men having had from six to eight years service, and most of them campaigning experience as well. I am not going to pursue this matter further, but I contemplate with some dismay what might happen in years to come in the event of disturbances on our North-Western frontier. If we were in a really difficult position there we should have to send out two Army corps for the purpose of the defence of India composed partly of recruits and partly of Reservists of two years service. I do not think anyone can contemplate that possibility with equanimity. I hope His Majesty's Government will seriously consider this matter. They have had many warnings from competent military and civil authorities, and among the latter I would specially mention Lord Haliburton and Sir Ralph Knox. The noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War took me to task at the conclusion of the debate yesterday because I had not accepted a statement which he made, and which was also made by the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary, that the other members of the Government were in agreement with their colleague the Secretary of State for War on a certain scheme of Army reform. I confess I do not now know what that scheme is. If the noble Earl will say that the Government are in agreement with their colleague in the scheme in its entirety, which was outlined by him in another place, I will, of course, accept that statement without demur, and only regret the decision of the Government. I move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Majesty for a Return of the ages of the men enlisted into the Infantry of the Line under the new nine-years regulation up to March 31st, 1905." — (*The Viscount Hampden.*)

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE for WAR (The Earl of Donoughmore): My Lords, as regards the last Question which the noble Viscount has asked, I can only refer him again to the speech delivered by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs yesterday. I have read that speech since hearing it last night, and I claim that the noble Marquess made it perfectly clear that he and his colleagues support my right hon. friend in the scheme which he has put forward. The other question touched upon by the noble Viscount is a very important one, but in almost every Army in the world two years training is now considered sufficient. We believe that two years training is sufficient for an infantryman. As regards the Motion which the noble Viscount has moved, I shall be very glad to grant him the Return. Of course, he will understand that he has asked for information which, under present arrangements, we have not got at the War Office. We have had to write to recruiting offices for it. Letters calling for this Return were dispatched the day after the noble Viscount put the Motion on the Paper, and as soon as we have collected the information the Return will be laid on the Table.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT.

Lord MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the constitution of the Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of Sections 78 and 87 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in connection with the measurements of tonnage of merchant ships; to ask what representatives of merchant officers and seamen are acting on this Committee, by whom were they nominated, and what is the numerical strength of those they represent, and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Committee, so far as the interests of merchant officers and seamen are concerned, is defective in constitution and calculated to defeat the objects for which it has been formed."

I should in the first place state that I am calling attention to this subject entirely in the interests of the officers and men of our merchant ships, whose hard life is rendered still harder by the miserable conditions under which they labour in the matter of accommodation and living room. Though it has been quiescent in regard to previous Parliamentary Bills of the kind, the Marine Department of the Board of Trade awoke from its slumbers at the very last moment and successfully prevented the passing of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill, which proposed to levy dues on the gross instead of the net tonnage. The Board of Trade's excuse for stepping in in such a belated way was that such a Bill would tend to reduce the living spaces of the crews of merchant vessels. The Report of the Select Committee found the preamble of the Bill proved, but the Committee stated that they were unanimously of opinion that the Board of Trade should simultaneously, and at an early date, initiate legislation with a view to raise the minimum of crew space per man required by Section 231 of the Merchant Shipping Act. It was ultimately decided that a Committee should be appointed to consider the whole subject of the incidence of tonnage dues, with particular reference to its bearing on living accommodation on board ship.

Answering a Question in another place, the late President of the Board of Trade stated that a representative of seamen would sit on this Committee. I should mention that the Merchant Service Guild addressed a communication to the Board of Trade putting forward in a very strong way the serious grievances of the officers of many merchant vessels in respect of the unsuitable, insufficient, and often insanitary nature of the accommodation provided for them. The announcement that a Committee was to be formed gave great satisfaction to seafarers, as it looked as if at last a Government Department was in sympathy with their claims. This satisfaction has given way to despondency, for what the Board of Trade have given with one hand they have taken away with the other. Professedly they are anxious to protect the interests of our seamen, but when it comes to these men being properly and adequately represented on the Committee it is quite another story. The tactics of the Marine Department of the Board are the usual ones of "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds."

Now, my Lords, I am anxious to know who are supposed to represent our merchant officers and men on the Committee. There are, I understand, three members of it who have had nautical experience. The first of these is Captain Chalmers, who, as nautical adviser to the Board of Trade, is likely to represent official views rather than anything else. Besides, your Lordships must take into consideration the fact that he left the sea twenty-nine years ago, since when the whole conditions of merchant ships have been revolutionised. Another gentleman Captain Acton Blake, whose life as an Elder Brother of Trinity House has been cast in pleasant places. Previous to his election as an Elder Brother the views he publicly expressed on the merchant service were dissented from by many members of his own profession and members of the Nautical Society of which he was a member. Both Captain Chalmers and Captain Acton Blake are able and conscientious men, but they cannot be looked upon, and are not looked upon, as representative of the officers of our merchant ships.

The other nautical member of the Committee is Mr. J. Havelock Wilson, who has acted as secretary of the Seamen's and Firemen's Union—now an utterly discredited organisation. I should like to have some information regarding its numerical and financial strength at the present time. This member of the

Committee seems to have honoured the law rather in the breach than the observance, judging by the record which I read out to your Lordships on a former occasion, when my noble friend the Earl of Wemyss gave your Lordships his opinion that no man, with a record such as I read—he did not care whom he represented—was a fit and proper person to put upon a Committee of Inquiry, and yet he is still a *persona grata* with the Marine Department of the Board of Trade. I trust that your Lordships will express strong disapproval of this. Captain Chalmers, Captain Acton Blake, and Mr. Havelock Wilson were the three nautical members of the Mercantile Marine Committee, and the Merchant Service Guild, representing over ten thousand captains and officers of merchant ships, declined absolutely to have anything to do with its proceedings owing to its constitution. Thus the assistance of a great power in nautical matters was lost.

These three gentlemen appear, however, to be prime favourites with the Marine Department for their Committees, for, together with Mr. William Milburn and Colonel Denny, who were also members of the Mercantile Marine Committee, they are now sitting on the present Tonnage Committee. The farce is complete when we know that five members of it are once more deliberating a subject upon which they have already given their views in the Report of the Mercantile Marine Committee. Is it possible that they can, in justice to themselves, say anything different from what they said a few months ago? The Report of the Mercantile Marine Committee was quite fruitless so far as giving seamen better accommodation was concerned. Therefore the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, though, as I have said, professedly anxious for improvement, must be aware that the present Tonnage Committee will most probably be equally barren of result. The failure of the Mercantile Marine Committee made it imperative that other and fresher blood should be infused into future Nautical Committees. The Board of Trade have any amount of choice, and it is their business to take advantage of it.

It is our port medical officers who are best qualified to speak about the accommodation given to officers and seamen. The Medical Officer of Health for the port of London, in his Report, states that the results of the Mercantile Marine Committee Inquiry are "most disappointing." There is no mistaking him when he declares that the conditions under which seamen have to live on board ships are such as would not be tolerated for an instant on shore. I would point out to your Lordships that seamen are allowed seventy-two cubic feet per head. In common lodging-houses even the allowance is 300 per head, and in Army barracks it is 600 feet. The Report of the Medical Officer of London says that, to improve the conditions of seamen's accommodation on board vessels, the following requirements are necessary:—(1) an increase in the available cubic space; (2) an increase in the available floor space; (3) more efficient ventilation; (4) sufficient light, natural and artificial; (5) thorough insulation of bare iron—my noble friend Lord Ellenborough could tell your Lordships what a miserable thing it is for a man, after spending his watch on deck and getting wet through and chilled, to turn into his berth and find the clothes sopping wet through drippings from bare iron overhead—(6) a separate room for meals and recreation—sailors, however, have little chance for recreation when at sea—and (7) a washhouse.

The Medical Officer of Glasgow, speaking at the Sanitary Congress, said that in some of the larger liners reaching Glasgow it was not uncommon to see bunks placed in all available corners, absolutely dark, and little short of coffins. If this is the case with liners your Lordships can imagine what it is often like in tramps. The Medical Officer of Health for the port of Manchester says that out of a total of 2,385 ships inspected, no fewer than 916 showed some one or other insanitary condition, the insanitary conditions discovered amounting to no fewer than 1,876, a considerable proportion of which were cases of contraventions of the Merchant Shipping Act. These are scathing commentaries on both the action of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade and the Report of the Mercantile Marine Committee. One would have thought that, as health and sanitation on board ship were vitally concerned, some medical expert would have been invited to sit on the Committee. I trust I have proved to you the unrepresentative character of the Committee, and have clearly shown that five members of the present Tonnage Committee are already committed to views on a subject which the Board of Trade have invited them to inquire into again. The benefit to officers and seamen will, in all probability, be *nil*, and the Marine Department of the Board of Trade will have attained its object. To stop this waste of time and public funds I have felt it my duty to lay these facts before your Lordships, and I hope you will accord your support to my Motion.

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of Sections 78 and 87 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in connection with the tonnage of merchant ships, so far as the interests of merchant officers and seamen are concerned, is defective in constitution and calculated to defeat the objects for which it has been formed."—(*The Lord Muskerry.*)

*Lord ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, I was under the impression that there was a Committee sitting on the question of tonnage with a view to seeing whether an alteration of the rules of tonnage would improve the condition of merchant seamen, but I find now that this Committee is sitting on another matter—on the question as to the space to be allowed for the propelling power, and also as regards the question of local rates for measurement of tonnage; and that the reference to this Committee has nothing whatever to do with sailors' accommodation. I would, therefore, suggest that the present Committee should go on with its work, and that another Committee should be appointed to deal with the question of the housing of merchant seamen. Everyone knows that the accommodation at present existing is very bad in a great many ships. In some ships it is good enough, but the difficulty is to discriminate between the good and the bad shipowner.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (The Marquess of Salisbury): My Lords, the noble Lord who has just sat down has most correctly stated the reference to the Committee which is now sitting. I confess I do not think your Lordships would have gathered it from the speech of the noble Lord who first addressed you. He roamed over a very wide subject—namely, the general question of the accommodation of seamen on our merchant ships. The Tonnage Committee has no such wide significance as that. It has to deal with a very plain and precise point, arising out of the rejection of a certain Liverpool Bill in the House of Commons in the last session of Parliament. I might remind your Lordships, though no doubt you are aware of the fact, that that Bill sought to change for the port of Liverpool the method upon which registered tonnage was calculated. Instead of the present general system, under which the propelling power and certain other spaces are legitimate deductions from the gross tonnage in order to arrive at the net tonnage, the Mersey Bill sought to provide that only a certain percentage of the tonnage should so be allowed to be deducted; that it should not be the complete but a limited amount of the tonnage devoted to propelling power which should be deducted.

That Bill was resisted by His Majesty's Government, and I think that is one of the points which the noble Lord has entirely forgotten. The noble Lord is evidently arraigning the Government as if we had appointed this Committee without reference to the interests of the crews of these ships. Why, my Lords, the very origin of the Committee was precisely the contrary. It was because the Government were not satisfied that the Mersey Bill would sufficiently protect the interests of the crews that they advised the House of Commons to reject the Bill. That is an important point to remember. The noble Lord asks what representatives there are of the masters and men on this Committee. He has taken the names of the gentlemen on the Committee and declared that he is not satisfied with them. I am very sorry that he is not satisfied, but I think the appointments to that Committee have been very proper and appropriate. Captain Blake is a master, and Mr. Havelock Wilson, who is very well known in connection with seamen, has also been appointed a member of the Committee. The noble Lord seemed to think that they stood alone. That appears to me to be a profound delusion. They do not stand alone. The interests of the shipowners are for this purpose precisely identical with the interests of the crews. The shipowners do not desire that there should be any limitations upon the deductions which are made from gross tonnage in order to arrive at net tonnage. They prefer that the present system should continue, and that they shall be allowed, without hindrance, to deduct the whole space occupied by propelling power from gross tonnage in order to arrive at net tonnage. Of course, that is not the view of those who represent harbour boards, dock companies, and so forth, but the shipowners' interests are for this purpose identical with the interests of the crews, and they are fully represented upon this Committee. There are three shipowners on the Committee; but it does not finish there. There is Captain Chalmers representing the Board of Trade.

The noble Lord has made an attack upon the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, and with great deference to him I should like to make a respectful protest against the language which he used. There is nobody responsible to your Lordships' House or to the other House of Parliament for the conduct of the Board of Trade except the Parliamentary Ministers who sit in the two Houses. The Marine Department consists of a very hard-working and efficient body of men, who work under the orders and directions of their Parliamentary chiefs, and for the noble Lord to come down to this House to attack that department as if they were responsible for the policy adopted by the Government is, I submit to your Lordships, a strong measure, utterly contrary to the traditions of this House and Parliamentary government. I take complete responsibility for what has been done by myself and my predecessor in office in the appointment of this Committee. We have complete confidence in the Marine Department of the Board of Trade and in Captain Chalmers, who has no axe to grind, and goes on the Committee as a perfectly impartial member. The noble Lord has no reason to suppose that his interest will be used in any other way than strictly impartially in order to protect the interests of the crews just as he would protect the interests of any other parties concerned. Besides Captain Chalmers there is my hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade, who is Chairman of the Committee—the very man who moved the rejection of the Mersey Bill on the grounds, partly, which the noble Lord has put forward. Lastly, there is on the Committee a very well-known Member of Parliament, the senior Member for Oldham, Mr. Emmott, who certainly does not represent any interest antagonistic to the men, and, being a representative of a large working-class constituency, if he was supposed to have any partiality one way or the other, he would no doubt be more in favour of the men than anybody else. But I do not suggest that for a moment. I know he would be impartial, but certainly not prejudiced against the interests which the noble Lord represents. That being the constitution of the Committee, I submit that the attack which the noble Lord has made upon it falls to the ground.

I can assure your Lordships and the noble Lord that His Majesty's Government are fully alive to all the difficulties connected with the life of the men who form our merchant service. There was, as I daresay your Lordships know, a Bill before Parliament last session, which has been reintroduced, or is about to be reintroduced this session, which will to some extent, we hope, make easier the conditions under which they live. I do not propose to go into details with regard to that Bill, nor do I say it will cover all the points with which the noble Lord has dealt, but it is an earnest of our desire to deal with that important branch of this subject. The Government cannot agree to the Motion of the noble Lord. I repeat that we have appointed this Committee in order to prevent the very evils arising to which the noble Lord has called attention, and which would have ensued if the Mersey Bill had been allowed to pass. We have, therefore, given an earnest of our desire as to the way in which this subject should be dealt with, and we are confident that when the Committee has reported it will be time enough for the noble Lord to criticise it, and if, as I believe it will be, the Report is a reasonable one, to support His Majesty's Government in any change of the law they may propose in pursuance thereof.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords I, have listened with great interest to the statement of the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Trade. I am greatly astonished to hear that this is only a Tonnage Committee and that it has no reference to accommodation on board ship. If that is so, why was any representative of the seamen put on it at all? They have absolutely nothing to do with tonnage. That is entirely a financial question between the shipowners and the various harbour and dock authorities. The noble Marquess stated that throughout my speech I spoke of masters. I never used the word "master"; I said "officers and men." The master is always pretty well berthed on board. It was the case of the officers and men of which I spoke. The document placed in my hands by the Merchant Service Guild stated that the Committee was appointed to consider the whole subject of tonnage, with particular reference to its bearing on living accommodation on board ship. I have had documents through my hands for the last seven years from the Merchant Service Guild, and have never found a single mistake in them. Therefore, with all due deference to the noble Marquess below me and to my noble friend Lord Ellenborough, I cannot help thinking that they may have made some mistake. I repeat that if this Committee is dealing with living accommodation it is not a representative Committee.

On Question, resolved in the negative.

House adjourned at Five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 31*st March*, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. **SPEAKER** laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]; Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Morley Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

London Southern Tramways Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).

Sir **HENRY KIMBER** reported from the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday next, at Two of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).

Sir **JOSEPH LEESE** reported from the Committee on Group G of Private Bills;

That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Wednesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Portobello, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Newmiln, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Bradford; Brampton; Brockley (four); Chertsey; Clapham; Darlington; Exeter; Hampstead; Lewisham (three); Liverpool; New Cross; Northampton (four); Putney; and Streatham; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Evesham; and North London; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Petition from Crewe, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 27th March, 1905, relating to Seamen's Lodging Houses in the County Borough of Salford [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 27th March, 1905, providing that Picric Acid and Picrates, and mixtures of Picric Acid, shall be deemed to be explosives within the meaning of the Act, with certain exceptions [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of February, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account presented, of all moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all Contracts for the grant of Deferred Life Annuities and for Payments on Death made, during the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 107.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Public Records (Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues). Copy of Second Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Explosions of Gas in Telephone Inspection Chambers—Precautions for Public Safety.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to a recent action to recover damages for personal injuries sustained through the explosion of gas in a telephone inspection chamber fixed in the footway in Regent Street; and, seeing that both Judge and jury expressed the opinion that, in the interests of public safety, the accumulation of gas in these telephone inspection chambers should be prevented by a system of ventilation, will he state whether he proposes to adopt the suggestion.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) My attention was called to the case, and it has been carefully considered. I fear that ventilation of the inspection chambers is not practicable, as I do not think the local authorities would consent to my fixing ventilating pillars in the footways, and the owners of private houses would not allow me to carry pipes up the walls. Ventilating covers could not be adopted, because they would not keep the cables free from mud and water. I am proposing to lay down certain precautions to be taken by my staff when opening manholes in which the presence of gas is suspected; but it is right to say that, so far as the facts are known to me, no precautions taken by my employees would have prevented the recent explosions in Regent Street.

Learners in the Post Office.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state what is the number of learners employed in the Post Office service in Ireland at the present time, giving length of service and rate of wages; also corresponding particulars in connection with England and Wales.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The numbers on or about the 14th March were: Ireland—Male, 260; Female, 145. England and Wales—Male, 1,481; Female, 702. Scotland—Male, 232: Female, 146. The usual rate of wages is 6s. a week for males, and 5s. for females. The rates for learners with more than two years service have just been increased. The average length of service is under two years.

Relief of the Unemployed.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Bill for the establishment of authorities to deal with the question of the unemployed will set up a central authority with power to undertake, either alone or in conjunction with subordinate authorities, public works of national importance like the improvement of the navigation of great estuaries, in cases where the resources of local authorities are too limited to enable them to undertake the work.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am afraid that I could not undertake to give beforehand any information as to the contents of the Bill which the Government propose to introduce dealing with the question of the unemployed.

Estate of the late Thomas Flynn.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will cause inquiries to be made through His Majesty's Consul-General in New York as to the cause of the delay in the distribution of the estate of the late Thomas Flynn, a native of Ireland, who died in Warwick, near Providence, Rhode Island, in February, 1902.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Consul-General will be requested to report.

The Church Dispute in Scotland—Disturbances at Auchterarder, Perthshire.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether his attention has been directed to the disturbances at Auchterarder, Perthshire, on Sundays the 19th and 26th instant, when members of the Free Church congregation were stoned and assaulted when leaving their place of worship; and whether he will order an inquiry into the matter, with a view to affording protection in future to the worshippers.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The disturbances referred to were brought to my knowledge. I caused inquiry to be made, and put myself in communication with the sheriff on the subject. Steps have already been taken to put a stop to the conduct referred to; these steps were largely effective on the 26th instant; and I am communicating further with the local authorities, and believe all cause of complaint will now be removed.

Dismissals of Dockyard Employees.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the

Admiralty whether he can give any information as to the prospects of the discharging of employees from the Royal Dockyards; and whether he can give an assurance that every effort will be made to avoid hardship and inconvenience.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) It will be necessary to reduce the *personnel* of the dockyards during the coming financial year, but the dismissals will be carried out as gradually as possible, and it is hoped they will not at any time exceed twenty-five in a week at Portsmouth. Every care has been taken to effect the reductions with the least possible amount of hardship, and the notices recently given at Portsmouth were issued under a misapprehension by the Admiral-Superintendent there.

Irish Agricultural Department—Catholic Clerks in the Veterinary Branch.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the opinions of Irish local bodies as to the treatment by the Department of Agriculture of the Catholic gentlemen in the veterinary branch, and of the fact that the Vice-President's inquiry into the case took cognisance only of the views of the higher officials and did not admit evidence from the Catholic gentlemen concerned, he will consider the advisability of granting a full inquiry into the whole matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I beg to refer to the Answer given to the hon. Member's Question on the 6th instant.† No further inquiry is called for or necessary.

Amounts Expended on Military Works Apart from Annual Estimates.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will state the sums expended out of loans, apart from the Annual Estimates, since 1895, on military defensive works in the United Kingdom; and what sums are allocated for similar works in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Bromley Davenport.*) The total expenditure on defence works at Home (inclusive of the Channel Islands) under the Imperial Defence and Military Works Loans since April 1st, 1895, has amounted to about £1,600,000. The balance remaining for expenditure is estimated at £477,000, inclusive of amounts required for works in progress.

COAL MINES (WEIGHING OF MINERALS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. COMPTON RICKETT (Scarborough) said that this was a short Bill of which he had the honour to move the Second Reading to-day. It really standardised and provided for certain practices largely adopted by masters and men throughout England; but not adopted in Scotland by any means universally. These provisions were really Amendments to the Act of 1887, and provided for the appointment of a deputy check-weigher, for certain machinery regarding his appointment and removal; to provide shelter from the weather for the check-weigher and his deputy; to extend the system of check-weighing to men who worked under contract where there was a contractor standing between the employer and the men; and in some other small details to amend the Act of 1887. The position of check-weigher appears in the year 1860, when there was a Regulation of Coal Mines Act passed by the then Home Secretary, Sir George Lewis, under the Government of Mr. Palmerston, of which Mr. Gladstone was a member. This Act recognised the duty of the check-weigher, but it did not define whether coal should always be taken by measure, by gauge, or by weight, and it permitted it to be treated either by weight, by measure, or by gauge. This caused a great deal of complaint, and in 1866–67 the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee to consider the grievances of the men. The men complained that in the greater part of England there was a rough-and-ready method of judging by tub, and payment by the tub was prevalent. Those tubs varied in size, and with the development of machinery, the deepening of shafts, the enlarging of premises and tram lines, the tubs tended to increase in size, and were not the same size in one colliery as in another. Although he did not suggest that this was intentionally fraudulent, yet it had the effect of depriving the men of their due; and they had good ground for complaint. The owners at that time objected to the weighing system, preferring the measure system, because they said that the small coal brought up filled the interstices of the tub, and the measure really gave the net result of the large coal of the tub, whereas by the weighing system they would have to take the small as well as the large coal. The Committee at that time declined to recommend payment by weight. The matter drifted on until 1872, when the Coal Mines Act was passed, and at that date they finally abandoned the use of the measure and provided that it should be taken by weight only, allowing, of course, the right to the men to check the weight, so that the masters paid them. Earl Morley, speaking in the House of Lords, defended the claim of making the weight the standard on the ground that coal is sold by weight and not by measure, and that the men were entitled to be paid by weight inasmuch as it was the same principle on which the masters received payment on the article itself.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 420.

Now it was quite evident that it was impossible to pay for the coal actually drawn unless they provided some sort of method for determining the weight of foreign substances brought up accidentally or through carelessness with the coal which could not, and ought not, to be treated as net coal on which payment should be made to the men for getting it. Therefore the Act of 1877 provided that deductions should be made from coal for dross and foreign substances brought up with the coal. This very much increased the duties of those who were appointed to check-weigh, for it introduced a new element into it, at all events a very important one. He had not only to protect the interests of the men in the matter of weight, but also to protect them against the employer, or representative of the employer; to see that the proper amount was deducted for the rubbish sent up with the coal, partly through accident—that was recognised—but more or less from inattention on the part of some of the men to their duties. On the other hand, such a practice was liable to abuse, and practically the check-weigher became for the time being the representative of the men in all matters of dispute, and these disputes extended beyond the mere question of weight or deduction. Practically the importance of the check-weigher was due to the fact that the check-weigher settled with the representatives of the collieries innumerable complaints, adjusted matters on the spot, and prevented them being referred to the representatives at large, either to the Federation of Mineowners or to the Federation of Miners. They did at first hand some of the work of the union in a common-sense and rule-of-thumb way. Therefore he would ask the House to attribute to the check-weigher more importance than that of a mere man who was placed at the pit head to see that the proper amount of coal was weighed, and that the men were paid on the amount brought to the pit bank.

Other complaints had been made that there was a difficulty under the Act of 1887 in determining the amount of small coal, although that difficulty was largely got over through an instruction being given by the employer and the men not to send the small to bank; and a large amount of small coal that came out of the pit was treated not under the head of "small," but treated as a case of improperly filling the tubs or trams. Now for a long time past there had been no difficulty in adjusting these delicate matters between the employers and men, and in a large number of collieries throughout the length and breadth of these islands matters went on from year's end to year's end unchallenged. In some cases there were arrangements made for taking an average. This agreement system had been growing and was generally satisfactory. If any further changes were desired from the Act of 1887 they had better be settled by masters and men out of the House. To introduce them into this Act would be to bring in matters highly controversial. Those who promoted this Bill had adopted advice from himself and others, unloading the Bill of anything which could be called controversial, and rendering the Bill so simple as almost to excite a smile amongst Members of this House. He trusted it would be recognised upon the other side that moderation and consideration had been shown, and that the Bill would not be endangered in its passage through Committee by attempting to put into it something which might bear a relationship to it, but which could not be settled by common consent, as the clauses in this Bill certainly could. There were comments made by his right hon. friend the Member for East Fife in 1896, in regard to a different Bill then before the House. But in 1896 the question of deduction was in a state of chaos, and he was at liberty to say that the late Home Secretary would not have made the same comment to-day as he made then. He would have been there, if he had not had an engagement out of town, to support this Bill, and he hoped that it would pass disembarrassed of other amendments.

Now, there were nearly 3,000 check-weighers employed in different parts of England and Scotland. These men were representing hundreds of thousands of others at work. They were picked men who had to represent their fellows, whom they had to trust in matters of weight and deduction; they were men who had secured by their conduct and character the confidence of their fellows; and therefore, in asking for some consideration in the matter of a deputy, in the matter of shelter, the details of their appointment, the standardising of the position both of the weigher himself and of his deputy, they were asking consideration for a class of men who were the representatives of the body of the miners of the United Kingdom. Of course they might find here and there cases in which weighers had been unreasonable or had interfered, or gone beyond their duties, but the law protected the employer, and provided, in the case of interference of the men beyond the duties of weighing, that there should be an opportunity of going before a summary Court of Jurisdiction, and obtaining the removal of the weigher. But the weigher was not a man who was simply selected by agreement or contract; he formed part of the law of the land in relation to coal mines, and therefore his rights should be guarded by this House quite as carefully as should be the rights of property. He formed part of the Acts of Parliament relating to coal-mining. If there were cases in which complaint had been made of the supervision of the weigher being too minute, there were also cases on the other side in which employers had acted unreasonably, and, broadly speaking, those who knew the trade were quite aware, taking the body of men and the body of employers, that there was fairly good agreement between the two sides; and bad cases, which were very exceptional, were quite as much to be found in the ranks of the employers as they were to be found in the ranks of the men. The demand for a deputy was simply that when, through illness, the weigher himself could not perform his duties, or when he was called away, perhaps on business belonging to his Miners' Association—for, remember, these men were distinguished by their ability to represent others by reason of their appointment, and that, therefore, they naturally had other duties to perform beyond the routine duties of the check-weigher—when there was reasonable cause for their leaving their duties they were to have the right in that case of putting on a deputy. It was far better that the deputy's position should be legalised, for he then had the opportunity of learning his duties and feeling that he was recognised, that he was a responsible man, and he was more likely to perform those duties in a satisfactory manner. Most collieries at the present time allowed so reasonable an arrangement, but that had been objected to in some cases, and any employer who thoroughly disliked the whole system and regarded it as a source of espionage could object, of course, and would embarrass the men by asking that if by any accident the check-weigher could not perform his duties, no one should do his duties for him. Now, that was not in the interests of the employer, because the men would naturally be suspicious of deductions made or questions of weight going on behind their backs in the absence of their representatives, and for the sake of peace, and in order to maintain confidence on both sides, if it were right to have the check-weigher, surely it was right to have a deputy. Why, even in the duties of the House it was necessary to have a deputy for the Chair, and for the Chairman of Committees.

Then there was a clause in the Bill providing for the method of appointment. The original Act of 1887 stated that if a man were appointed check-weigher by ballot there was a legal recovery for the wages of the check-weigher; that was to say, the wages paid by the employer were to be stopped out of the money paid by the miners—the wages became recoverable by law. But in the case where there was no ballot, such legal recovery would not stand, although the men as a whole had, by the statute of 1887, the right to appoint a weigher; that was to say, if all the men came together and agreed unanimously, or agreed by a majority on a man, that man would be the check-weigher; or if they sent a communication to the employer that would give them, under Clause 13 of the original Act, he believed, the right to appoint a check-weigher, but it would not give the check-weigher the right to recover his wages. He quite admitted that the drafting of this particular clause, the second section of the first clause, was a little intricate, but really all that was intended was this; that if the original power vested in the whole of the employees were not exercised and a ballot taken, there should be a meeting held, and the result of that ballot should be certified by the chairman of that meeting; that the chairman of the meeting should certify either in the first place that the ballot had been taken and the result of the ballot was so-and-so, or, failing a ballot, should give the names of all those, presumably a majority, who had voted for a particular man, and make a communication giving the names to the employer. This was to provide the machinery for giving the employer a definite statement as to the man was who was to be the representative of the men as check-weigher. As a matter of fact, largely, he believed the ballot system was obtaining in England. He thought that the other method was quite exceptional, and he would hardly suppose that anyone would desire to appoint a check-weigher except through the means of the ballot, a very effectual and easy way of ascertaining the will of the men and which also provided satisfactory means for the payment of the weigher himself.

Mr. Compton Rickett.

The fourth section of the first clause provided shelter from the weather for the man who had to use a book and refer to papers, and who had to remain at the pit-head for the greater part of the day, and possibly to move about at times to follow the tram or the tub, and then return to his little office and make his notes. That seemed so obviously reasonable that one could hardly imagine that it was not the case throughout England. As far as England was concerned, it was practically the case. As far as Scotland was concerned, for some reason which he did not know and could not understand, except it were the general case of the "saxpence," some of the Scotch collieries did not do that. He had been furnished, but would not read it, with a list, for he did not want to pillory anyone, but he was told that there were dozens of collieries in Lanarkshire that did not provide protection for the check-weigher, and that, in one particular case that came before the Courts, the employer, feeling great disgust at having to comply with the law at all, took down the accommodation that did exist and left the weigher to the mercy of the weather. Now, that certainly would not be the wish of anyone with feelings of humanity, and also looked like a petty method to endeavour to evade the provisions of the Act. Therefore, this clause simply provided that space, area for two persons, a desk and table, and so on, should be provided for the check-weigher. Further down in Sub-section 3 of Clause 2, it provided that the check-weigher might recover expenses properly incurred by him in carrying out his work, which expenses were trivial, practically a matter of stationery. It had been thought desirable to put them into the Act, but he felt it was so trivial that it would be hardly challenged.

There was a further clause, to give the workmen the right to remove the weigher and to arrange the method by which that removal would take place. That was simply to give those who elected the check-weigher by ballot the right to use that method to remove him. Surely if the check-weigher lost the confidence of the men it was only fair that, as he was their representative and not acting for himself, they should have the right properly and legally to remove him. This was not intended in any way to prejudice the rights of the masters to remove, and if it were thought that the word "remove" left any doubt in the matter he was quite prepared in Committee to agree to the insertion of words to show that this removal on the part of the men should not in any way prejudice the general right of the master in case of complaint sustained of interference or misconduct on the part of the check-weigher.

The only other thing, which he believed was not of very great interest to employers, but of which this House might require some sort of explanation, referred to the dealing with cases in which the collieries were worked, or partly worked, under contract. Now, he was informed that the contract system, the system of letting out to a contractor or more than one contractor the working of the colliery, so as to secure the employers from direct dealing with the men who removed the coal, was a system that now and again had been adopted, more particularly by employers who did not care to come against the union officials; but he was glad to say, because he would have thought an ordinary employer would have wished to control directly the labour in his pit and would not have wished to delegate that control to an intermediary, that very largely that system was being discontinued in England. It existed in some parts of Staffordshire and some other parts of England. It was very little known in Yorkshire and did not appear to be on the increase. But he must say that where it was introduced for the first time it was largely aimed at the union. It was practically intended to remove the men from contact with their union and place them under the control of a contractor, who, by dividing them in groups, could obtain a control over them which the employer would not have if union men were employed in the bulk. He did not say that as a moral ground for forbidding the system. The employers ought to have the right, if they pleased, if it were to their interest to do so, to adopt the contract system, but inasmuch as even where the men were paid a day wage the representative of the men ought to be the check-weigher in matters of deductions, and as the deductions were perhaps almost as important, if not more important, than the check weighing there was great reason for still maintaining this system of check-weighers even in collieries where part or even the whole was worked under the contract system. Moreover, a great deal of the work which was done under contract by day work need not be so done. A good deal of it was done, he was told, on returns of weight, and the men who worked under the contract system had no protection at all unless there should be some one who represented them abovestairs at the pit-head, in the daylight, and who could see what was fair between masters and men. Of course, it might be said that the contractor himself might do that, and that he had an interest in not paying a man for getting less coal than the coal actually got. But as between the contractor and the men who worked it was right and fair surely that someone should represent these men who worked under the contractor and who had no means otherwise of checking the contractors who, for the purposes of management, were their masters quite as much as if the contractors were the owners of the colliery. On the other hand, the protection of the check-weigher was extended to the contractor as well, although the appointment of a check-weigher by the contractors was a very poor substitute for an appointment by the whole of the men. What they asked was simply this, that the system of a check-weigher should be encouraged and not discouraged; and while they did not ask for any interference by legislation in a matter of contracts, leaving that to work its own cure and take its own course, they did ask that the men working under contract, under whatever system, should be permitted to elect a check-weigher, and a contractor, though he might have different methods of working, part by weight and part by time, should be called upon, as he was now, to contribute to the wages of the check-weigher. That might appear at first blush as if it required an explanation, but he thought if they looked into it, if his explanation were at all clear, they would see it was not asking an unreasonable thing. That almost exhausted the clauses of the Act. He hoped that the House would realise that a great deal had been done to simplify this Bill, and that, if there was not much interest shown in it, its reasonableness must not be gauged and measured, he would not say weighed, by the state of the House at the present time. Really the Bill was so little controversial, and so much had been done outside to accelerate its passage through the House before the Second Reading, that little remained, he hoped, to debate. And he ventured therefore to commend it to the judgment and consideration of the House. He begged to move the Second Reading.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhonddha) pointed out that every time this proposal had come before the House the right of the collier to have his coal check-weighed was recognised. What they claimed to-day was to improve these facilities, by allowing the appointment of a sub-check-weigher. Since the House had admitted that right it was essentially necessary, in order to protect the continuity of the weighing to the collier, that someone should be appointed at very little notice indeed to take the place of the regular check-weigher. The check-weigher had not only to take an accurate account of the weight of the work done by the collier who employed him, but he had every week end to give to the collier the amount of the coal he had weighed for him. In the best conducted places the weight was taken by the employer from the check-weigher on daily sheets. At the close of the day the weigher handed over his sheet to the head clerk of the company at the office. If the check-weigher should happen to be away for one day in the week there was no chance for the collier to have the full weight of what he produced during the week. How reasonable therefore was the request that a sub-check-weigher should be appointed to protect the collier. It was so reasonable that he did not think the House would regard it as a frivolous demand, but one that was absolutely necessary. Then facilities were wanted to enable the weigher to take the weight. According to the law the collier had a right to test the weighing-machine, but it was nonsense to talk of using a weighing-machine without proper weights. To the credit of the South Wales colliery employers he must say they did not trifle with things that were necessary to give the check-weigher proper facilities. He did not want to brag about them, but if what was done in this respect in South Wales was done in other parts of the country there would be no necessity for this Bill. Then the places where these accounts were taken ought to be a little more healthy. They should be water-tight, ice-tight, and wind-tight, and all kinds of tights. He made all these proposals to protect the collier who was in danger of his life every moment of the day—men this country were so much indebted to, and who were doing so much for the comfort of all classes of the community. As far as sub-contracting was concerned he would like to do away with the system—he referred to those contractors who employed a number of men to hew coal for them at so much per ton, while getting so much per ton more themselves. They had taken from the Bill everything they thought was contentious, and they hoped it would be carried without a division. He was sure that the Government would see that its object was to bring up the indifferent employer, the unsympathetic employer, he did not want to say the bad employer, they knew what he meant—to the standard of the really good employer, who did all these things voluntarily. Three-fourths of the employers were doing what was asked for and in fact the proposals of the Bill were so right and just in principle to the men that he hoped no one would stop its progress to the Statute-book.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."—(*Mr. Compton Rickett.*)

Colonel PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton) said he desired to acknowledge the very moderate manner in which the Bill had been put before the House by both the mover and seconder. They had taken great care to place before the House very clearly what they desired, and the Bill had his most cordial assent.

He was very glad indeed to hear from the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley that what was asked for in the Bill was already supplied by the majority of the mineowners at the pit mouth. Surely it was a most proper thing that a deputy should be appointed. They knew very well that this weighing of coal had to be very carefully done, and it was a work of great responsibility. Therefore, if the check-weigher was ill it was only proper that the deputy should take his place. With regard to the clauses as to the election of the check-weigher, it was admitted that there might be some improvement necessary there. He, personally, could not say what improvement there ought to be, but, generally speaking, he felt sure that the promoters of this Bill had done their best to improve the machinery and to suggest such things as might be better than the mode at present in vogue. With regard to the shelter, that was surely an absolutely proper thing. It was of great importance that at the top of the pits, where the weather was more felt, there should, at any rate, be some proper and suitable shelter. The man had to do his work standing still; his limbs were not in active use at the time, and his circulation was, therefore, not as good as that of the man working with the spade. Therefore, every reasonable facility that possibly could be given ought to be given, and, if it was not given, it was quite correct the law should step in and see that some suitable arrangements were made.

There was one thing, however, which he might suggest to the promoters of the Bill, and to which he hoped they would give their attention. It was admitted that the promoters had listened to what had been pointed out to them outside; they had been very reasonable and had taken a great deal of care to see that the Bill as it came before the House was a Bill that should receive the approval of the House. The suggestion he desired to make was that the present was a fit and proper time to legalise a great number of things that were practically done now, but which might or might not be against the law. He referred entirely to the contents of the boxes that came up for weighing. So far the Legislature had tried to define what could and what could not be weighed. It was admitted by the mover that a great many practices in vogue were possibly somewhat outside the law, or might be inside, but they were practical arrangements made between the employer and employed and they worked very well. There had been attempts to deal with this by two Governments. In 1895 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife did put into a Bill certain provisions to deal with this question of dirt, stones, and what was not coal. Coal ought to be paid for, and whatever coal came up was paid for at a certain rate, and the check-weigher saw that it was paid for; but there was a great deal of foreign substance that came up besides. If the workman was a bad workman there was more than if he was a good workman. That was the subject at present of a number of agreements, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife made some pertinent remarks on the point in 1896. He said that enactments should be passed to deal with this question. The Bill of 1896, brought in by the Unionist Government, contained a number of provisions to deal with this question of the dirt, and to legalise agreements made between employers and employees; those agreements had to have the sanction of the men and then they would become law. There were a number of provisions in the Bill of 1896 that had to do with the safety of the men, and the general feeling on both sides of the House was that it was in the interests of the portion of the Bill dealing with the safety of the men that the part affecting this question should be left out. The mover to-day admitted that at some future time this matter must be taken in hand and dealt with. There had been two occasions—one in 1895 under a Liberal Administration, and one in 1896 under a Unionist Administration—when there was not time and when the exigencies of the case were such that the question could not be dealt with, and he suggested that now was a good time to take the matter up. He did not think there would be any trouble in the promoters of the Bill and the Home Office arranging a thoroughly good list of provisions which should cover this matter altogether. If they did that they would get an Act of Parliament that was really worth passing and which would deal with the whole question. The promoters of the Bill knew exactly what he meant, and, if they agreed, they would no doubt meet the matter in Committee. Having made these remarks, he desired to say, as regarded the general principles of the Bill, and as regarded what had been said, that he agreed, and, at any rate, would support the Second Reading.

*Mr. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.) said that, as representing a Division of Lanarkshire in which this question was one of considerable interest, he desired to express his hearty sympathy with the proposals of the Bill. As the hon. Member for Scarborough had said, the matter was so simple that it was surprising that a Bill was necessary at all. As to the "black mark" which had been given against the employers of Lanarkshire, he had always had the feeling that on the whole they took a liberal interest in the men and did everything they could to further their comfort. He was glad to recognise on both sides a desire to do what was fair and just between man and man. That being the object and intention of the Bill he hoped the Second Reading would be carried with the full approval of the House.

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) congratulated the House on the tone and temper which had characterised the debate. The present was one of the occasions on which it was felt in all quarters of the House that the interests of employer and employed were identical, and the more that conviction operated on the minds of those who were interested in the question, the better it would be for the people concerned and for the country at large. No words of praise could go beyond the occasion in regard to these check-weighmen. They were employed under circumstances of considerable difficulty to perform operations of great delicacy, which required firmness and constancy in their execution, and he felt that they were entitled to the further protection proposed by this Bill. He fully sympathised with the desire to raise the laggard employer to the level of the better employer. The Bill was an illustration of development or evolution; it arose naturally and almost necessarily from the improved conditions of society. In spite of the language of pessimists, he believed that this country was advancing from one stage to another, and that when improvement took place in one class it pervaded all classes. The details of the Bill would be better dealt with by those chiefly interested, but he did not wish the opportunity to pass without expressing his full sympathy with the general scope of the measure, and the hope that as Amendments were made in the interests of the workmen, the opportunity would be taken to make Amendments of a corresponding character in the interests of the employers. Such an opportunity might never recur. Through the fortune of the ballot the Bill had been introduced at a very early period of the session, and he hoped advantage would be taken of the opportunity so to enlarge the scope of the Bill as to remove all remaining difficulties, and thus complete this section of the statute law in regard to this important question.

Colonel Pilkington.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) was glad to notice that the Bill had been received with general approval, but he felt some little uneasiness with regard to the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite that there should be introduced certain Amendments to remedy what he considered to be an inconvenient state of things with regard to the present law or the custom obtaining as to deductions.

Colonel PILKINGTON said that if certain additions were made to the Bill to sanction practices now in operation in many places—which were desired both by the promoters of the Bill and by the employers—he did not think the progress of the Bill would be in any way hindered. There would be no contention on the part of the Home Office, and no desire to obstruct the Bill.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said that what the hon. and gallant Member had stated was merely what he himself had stated a month ago. All he could say—and he was speaking in no hostile spirit—was that he appreciated the friendly spirit in which this measure had been received by the hon. and gallant Member opposite. He desired to point out, however, that there was no more controversial topic than that involved in the question of deductions, and there could be no more effective means of stopping the progress of this Bill than the introduction of such Amendments as had been suggested by the hon. and gallant Member for Newton in Committee, and he hoped that he and his friends had no intention of loading the measure with Amendments of that character. At present the relations of employers and employed were of the happiest description, and, speaking as one who had an intimate knowledge of those relations, he was glad to say that that state of things generally obtained, and it was very rarely that friction arose upon deductions. He believed that the law as it stood at present was quite adequate to meet the requirements both of the workers and their employers in regard to deductions. It was not necessary that they should be arithmetically ascertained, but employers and employed might say, "We will strike an average with or without the agency of a check-weigher so that we may arrive at what is to be a fair deduction, having regard to the particular seam or the quarter of the seam from which the coals are brought." With regard to minerals contracted to be gotten there was no difficulty arising in respect of deductions other than those contracted for. But another question arose where the employer sought to have a deduction made in respect of small coal. He admitted that was a difficulty, but it arose only where the relations between employers and workmen were not as happy as they might be. This was exactly what the Legislature provided for in the Act of 1872; namely, that the workmen should be paid according to the weight of the mineral contracted to be gotten, and this small coal was so held by the Court of Appeal as minerals contracted to be gotten. With regard to any question as to the scale of pay, that was a matter which depended upon the wage contract made, and it might be a less scale for a certain class of coal, such as soft coal in contradistinction to the hard coal. He knew that a difficulty arose, but he thought it was more imaginary than real, and it arose chiefly from the want of good relations between employers and workmen. He thought this was really a necessary Bill, and he had had much experience of the great necessity of having a better system in regard to the collection and payment of wages. He knew that hon. Members opposite took a kindly interest in measures of this kind, and he hoped they would not load it with Amendments of the character suggested by the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite. He also trusted that the hon. Member representing the Government would give the House some assurance that he would afford facilities for passing this measure, which had been conceded on all sides to be of a non-contentious character.

*SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) said he desired to express his general concurrence with the objects of this measure. He could hardly imagine a state of things in which a check-weigher was not allowed to have proper shelter. From the character of the check-weigher's duties he thought proper accommodation should be afforded him. They were entitled to the same kind of accommodation as the weigher. Check-weighing was not easy work at all; it was onerous and responsible work, in which a man had to be very alert. He did not see why any employer should object to the appointment of a deputy. His experience had rather been a peculiar one. He became interested with some others in a colliery some years ago. When they found that no check-weighers were employed at the colliery they thought that was not a satisfactory state of things and that the workmen ought to have protection. They put some pressure to get them to adopt check-weighers. This Bill was intended to facilitate the working of check-weighing. It had been said there was the possibility of the introduction of a clause to deal with the vexed question of deductions. That was a much more difficult question than the hon. Member seemed to think. It has been stated by the mover of the Bill that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife had modified the views which he formerly expressed in the House. He thought that a little more information as to what the right hon. Gentleman's views now were would be desirable.

*MR. COMPTON RICKETT said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

East Fife gave him authority for stating it had been unwise to attach a controversial question of this kind to the present Bill; accepted his statement that there had probably been a change in the practice, and that he would not express himself now so strongly as he did them.

*Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON said that the Member for East Fife had used some very strong language on the previous occasion derived from his experience as Home Secretary. His words were—

> "The state of the law on that subject at the present time was nothing short of scandalous."

and again—

> "He did not believe that there was any mineowner in this country who knew at the present moment whether the system of deduction observed in his mines was legal or illegal and whether he was not carrying on a system which might never have been agreed to between masters and men, exposing himself to daily penalties."

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda) said the relationship between employer and workman had totally changed since the time of that speech. There were boards of conciliation now instead of strikes.

*Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON said that did not affect the desirability of having a clause legalising and doing away with any suggestion of illegality in the actual procedure which was necessary to carry out the weighing of the material contracted to be gotten.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES asked if the hon. Member had in his mind the section of the Coal Mines Regulations Act which indicated the manner in which deductions might be made.

*Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON said that he had not in his mind the question of the separation of small coal, and it did not arise in the part of the country with which he was acquainted. He did not wish to weight this Bill with anything of a controversial character. He suggested that an effort should be made to arrive at a solution of the difficulty by the framing of a clause which would meet with the approval of both sides, and which would tend to peace in future. He further suggested that this effort might be made by means of a conference between the two sides, because it was desirable that they should approach the question with the view of settling it in such a way as would enable the parties concerned to deal in a peaceful way with any difficulties that might arise. He would remind hon. Members that when the Act of 1887 was passing through the House conferences were held between those interested, at some of which he had the honour to preside. The result was that they arrived at a solution of many points which had given rise to difficulty, and they succeeded in a harmonious way in materially improving the Bill. He hoped that in the present instance a clause might be proposed which would have the effect of settling a difficult question without anything like friction. What they all ought to desire was that the most just and perfect system should be employed which human ingenuity could devise.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said he desired to say a few words on behalf of the ironstone miners. Although this Bill was an Amendment of the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, and they were not engaged in coal mines, they would be affected, by it, for their work was regulated by the Coal Mines Act and not by the Metalliferous Mines Act. The largest body of ironstone miners in the country worked in the Cleveland district, which he represented in that House, and he supported the measure, the provisions of which would be warmly welcomed by his constituents. He regretted that it had not been found possible to extend the advantages relating to check-weighers to quarries. A considerable number of quarrymen were anxious to have an opportunity of appointing check-weighmen, but, unfortunately, by the title of this Act, which related only to miners under the Coal Mines Regulation Act, it would be impossible to move an Amendment to include quarries. Sooner or later quarries should be included, as the case of quarrymen stood on precisely the same footing as that of miners. He re-echoed the hope expressed by a previous speaker that the Government would give facilities for the Third Reading in order that the views of all parties might be carried out.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.) said there had been the most friendly and harmonious discussion on this measure that he had listened to for a long time. He thought it was very largely due to the extremely clear statement made by the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill. The hon. Member had taken those steps which were always advisable, of informing hon. Members and those interested in the Bill outside the House, of explaining beforehand what was really intended by the provisions of the Bill. The measure was extremely moderate and reasonable, and very sensible indeed. It was one of those smallish measures which were suggested by the practical experience of those who were engaged in the coal-mining industry. Both masters and men had seen the advantages derived from the employment of check-weighers, and they saw from their daily experience how the present position might be strengthened and improved. A check-weigher was really no more immune from the accidents of life than anybody else. He might have an attack of influenza or be killed, and the duties he was appointed to perform lapsed because there was no one to look after the interests of the men, and, indeed, he believed, the interests of the employers as well, which he was put there to safeguard. He would suggest to the House, therefore, that they should give permission that a check-weigher should have a deputy who could perform the duties when he was for some unavoidable cause absent. That was a reasonable proposal, and he did not think there would be the slightest objection to it in any quarter. A further proposal for the convenience of the check-weigher was that he should have shelter from the weather. He was really not aware that there was a pit in any part of the country where the man was denied reasonable shelter. It would seem unreasonable that in the climate of Scotland the check-weigher should be confined to the use of an umbrella and mackintosh to keep his papers dry. One of the proposals of this measure was that suitable water-tight shelters should be supplied for the men. They did not want anything very elaborate, but merely a shelter in which they could have a desk for writing and where the conditions would enable them to carry on their work in comfort.

A further proposal in the Bill related to the appointment of check-weighers. Sub-section 2 of Clause 1 provided that formal notification should be given to the employer that a certain man had been appointed check-weigher at a duly convened meeting. This was merely to enable the employer to know who really was the check-weigher instead of having to search about for the man in a case where some legal point arose. That was a very desirable object. Here, he thought, some further provision might be taken to secure that all those who were entitled to elect the check-weigher should have due notification that such an election was going to take place. Sub-section 3 of Clause 1 provided that where a check-weigher was appointed by a majority ascertained by ballot and paid according to the mineral gotten, the check-weigher so appointed should be deemed to be appointed on behalf of all the persons employed in the mine who were entitled to appoint him. There were two ways at present of appointing a check-weigher. If he was elected by a majority he could then only recover his expenses from those who appointed him. The object of this clause was that where he was appointed by a majority by ballot he should be held as representing the whole of the miners employed in the pit, so that he could recover his wages from all the miners. He understood that there was no intention to interfere with the law as it stood. It was merely to clear up a point where the check-weigher was appointed by a majority and not by ballot.

*MR. COMPTON RICKETT: I believe that the Act of 1887 provides that only in the case of appointment by ballot shall there be recovery of wages. I do not propose to alter that.

MR. COCHRANE said that under Section 14 of the 1887 Act there was ample power for recovering wages. He could not himself see why these elections did not always take place by ballot in view of the power given by that section. Subsection 5 of Clause 1 of the Bill was in the following terms—

> "When a check-weigher is appointed by a majority ascertained by ballot of the persons employed in the mine, and paid according to the mineral gotten, he shall not be removed except by a majority ascertained by ballot of the persons so employed and paid at the time of removal."

He was glad to know from hon. Members that this was not in any way intended to prejudice or interfere with the duties which employers had at present to discharge under certain Acts. Clause 2 of the Bill introduced a novel principle, and that was that those who were paid according to the weight of minerals gotten were to contribute to the wages of the check-weigher. There might be certain cases where the men were working on day wages for a contractor who himself was paid by the coal gotten out of the pit. These men were entitled to appoint a check weigher. He did not see anything unreasonable in that proposal. It appeared to him that all those directly or indirectly paid by the amount of mineral gotten were more or less interested in the appointment of the check-weigher, whose duties were not only to see that the minerals were correctly weighed but also to deal with the deductions for stones, dirt, and other material which came up with the coal. It was to the interest of those who were indirectly paid through a contractor that there should be a check-weigher, and under these circumstances he did not think it was an unfair or unreasonable proposal that they should contribute something towards his pay.

He now came to the point which was raised by the hon. Member opposite and by his hon. friend on his side as to the adding of a clause to this Bill to legalise the present arrangements that had been come to between masters and men in regard to deductions in respect of dirt, stones, and other improper filling in the coal buckets. Such an Amendment would have to be moved in Committee, and if that would wreck this little Bill he should regard it as a great misfortune. At the same time he thought there was reason in what had been said on this point. His hon. friend was not the only Member of the House who had tried to find a remedy for the present difficulty. This was not so simple a question as some of his hon. friends made out. They said, and it was true, that at present the law enabled them to deduct the amount of dirt and stones which came up to the surface. But both masters and men had found out that that was not the whole difficulty. The dirt and the stones which were quite unnecessarily dragged up to the surface were often put into the trucks through carelessness on the part of the workmen, and that was a considerable loss to the employers. Therefore, any arrangement which would work satisfactorily must make something more in the way of allowance besides dirt and stone.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES: That is done by statute now.

Mr. COCHRANE said he did not venture to argue with the hon. and learned Gentleman on a question of law; but there was the Nethersole judgment to the effect that the amount of coal gotten must be true weight; and for that purpose the amount gotten must be held to include dirt and stones; but that the amount of deductions for dirt and stones and improper filling might be made in any agreed way between masters and employees, provided such deductions did not exceed the actual quantity of dirt and stones so raised to the surface. But there were no means of making a penalty attach to the careless workman.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda): You can discharge him.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said that under the present statute there was a case heard very recently in which it was decided that it was not necessary that the dirt and stones should be weighed; but that employer and employed could arrive at an estimate of the amount and make an allowance for the dirt and stones without actually weighing them.

MR. COCHRANE said that it really came to this—that employers and employed wanted to have some fair arrangement. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fifeshire endeavoured to insert what he considered to be such a fair arrangement in a Bill introduced in 1895. That was to the effect that masters and men were to be permitted to contract freely for such deductions as they chose in respect of dirt, stones, or small coal, provided that the deductions were reasonable, and to render all deductions otherwise illegal whether they were so or not. What was fair and reasonable struck him in the same light as the right hon. Member for East Fifeshire; but obviously that was not a question to be discussed on the Second Reading of the Bill, but in Committee. He ventured to throw out the suggestion that in the interval between the Second Reading and the Committee stage, those interested might frame a clause that would meet the views of both parties. If that could be done it would be very useful. He had said all that was necessary at this stage. The Bill met with no hostility from the Government, and, for his part, he hoped there would be no division; and he would give his support to the Second Reading.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

MR. T. RICHARDS (Monmouthshire) moved that the Bill be sent to the Grand Committee on Trade.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc," put and agreed to.—(*Mr. T. Richards.*)

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL said he had always been jealous about sending Bills of this kind to the Grand Committee on Trade, but he believed that this was a case where the services of a Grand Committee would be eminently useful. He hoped that the work of the Committee would soon be accomplished and that a satisfactory result would be arrived at.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton) said that in moving the Second Reading of this Bill he believed he would have support largely from both sides of the House. The Bill was to remedy a great injustice done by recent Acts in not allowing women to sit on county councils or borough councils. This Bill was practically of one clause. It said—

> "It shall be lawful for women to be elected and to act as councillors and aldermen of county and borough councils, and metropolitan borough councils in the same manner and on the same conditions as men."

Objection had been taken to the Bill on the ground that it would only be a stepping-stone for ladies being asked to sit in this House. But he would point out that the duties of this House and of those councils to which the Bill applied, were to a great extent very different. The duties of this House were mainly legislative; the duties of the councils were mainly, almost entirely, administrative. In proposing this measure they were not taking a leap in the dark. Women had already sat and worked most usefully on public bodies. On boards of guardians they were brought into contact with the poor and with children; and it had been admitted that their co-operation with men on these bodies had been highly advantageous. They also sat on district councils, the working of which did not very much differ in character from the work of the county councils or the metropolitan borough councils. Then it must be remembered that on school boards women had done most useful work. He believed that in Scotland one of the most effective workers on any school board was a lady who was now the chairman of the Edinburgh School Board. Unfortunately school boards were now abolished in England, and their powers were transferred to the county councils; and women were practically disfranchised from sitting on these bodies, and some of the best workers on the school boards were now excluded from taking any part in educational work. That, in itself, was a powerful argument for placing women on the county councils and on the borough councils.

He would call attention to the fact that Lady Sandhurst, who had been directly elected to the London County Council had to submit to an action at law as to the legality of her election thereto, and that a judicial decision went against her. If it had not been for that case, although there might have been a doubt as to the legal right of ladies to sit on these councils, ladies would have been elected in many cases. The London County Council showed their appreciation of the value of the presence of ladies on these bodies by making Miss Cons an alderman. He was speaking in the presence of many members of the London County Council, who could testify more effectively than he could as to the excellent work which women had done in the proceedings of that council. That work was largely done through committees and sub-committees, and he believed that women had been selected as members of no fewer than sixteen committees and sub-committees of that body. That spoke very eloquently for the wisdom of placing women on county councils, and enabling them to co-operate with men in the work of those councils. At present men had to visit lunatic asylums. He, himself, had visited the female side of these institutions and the conclusion he had come to was, after that experience, that no man should be allowed to go there. It was a work eminently fitted for women. Then there was the case of providing homes for babies. Only women were fitted for such work. Again, they all knew that in visiting industrial homes for boys and girls, a woman's sympathetic voice and touch was most powerful. The same work had to be done in the borough councils as in the county councils. He knew that some husbands objected to sit by the side of their own wives at these councils, although they did not object to sit beside another councillor's wife. That, however, was a selfish view. The other night the Lord Chief Justice drew attention to Miss Mary Bateman, who had edited the first volume of *Borough Customs* and said she had shown "She knew more of the law of the period dealt with than nine-tenths of the lawyers who would read the book. She had thoroughly entered into the spirit of those old customs." If that were true, would not such a lady put new life into the work of the councils of to-day? As regarded the metropolitan borough councils, he was on extremely safe ground, because a Bill entitling women to election passed its Second Reading in 1900 by a large majority. The chief reason why he now asked the House to give a Second Reading to this Bill was that, as long as women were not allowed to serve on borough councils and county councils an artificial restraint was placed upon constituencies in the selection of their representatives. We could not be said to govern ourselves with the full strength of the intelligence we had at our command while women were prevented from serving on such councils. There should be free import of ideas and no protection. No doubt the home was woman's sphere, but not the only one. The nation was a cluster of homes, and women ought to be invited to take an active part in managing and regulating the homes of the nation. He asked the House to give the Bill a Second Reading.

Dr. Shipman.

SIR RICHARD JEBB (Cambridge University) said he desired to express his entire sympathy with the Bill the Second Reading of which had been moved in such an able speech as that which had just been delivered. He had had some knowledge of the co-operation of women in the province of education. Women were members of the Commission on Secondary Education that reported some years ago, and women were at this moment members of the consultative committee of the Board of Education and of many other educational committees. So far as his experience went, he could add his testimony to the abundant testimony that was forthcoming from all who had had similar experience that the assistance of women in the discussion of educational questions was of the greatest possible value. In matters relating to public health, the employment of children, the prevention of cruelty to children, industrial schools, and many other matters, the intervention of women in local government was obviously of the greatest value. They brought to these departments of local government a knowledge and insight into the conditions affecting women and girls which men could not possibly contribute. The great progress made in the higher education of women was a fact that should not be lost sight of. There were probably few localities in the country where it would be difficult to find women well qualified in every respect to take their part in the duties for which it was proposed to make them eligible. He sympathised with the view of the hon. Member for Northampton that by failing to enlist women in these departments of local government, and in the discussion of questions bearing so directly on the health and well-being of the community, we were losing a force of the most valuable kind—a force which could not be supplied in any other way. He earnestly hoped that the House would consent to the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON, in moving the rejection of the Bill, said that the proposals contained in the measure rested much more on sentiment than on good sense or practical principles. He did not deny that women could usefully occupy places on education committees and some other administrative bodies, but that was not a reason for exposing them to the disagreeable circumstances connected with contested elections for borough or county councils. There were methods at present by which women could be enabled to discharge duties for which they were particularly fitted in connection with administrative bodies, but the general work of a borough council or a county council did not come within the proper sphere of a woman's activity. Men, he submitted, were quite competent to deal with such questions as levying rates and other public matters. No doubt those who opposed the Bill in that House would be in a small minority; but he claimed that outside the House they represented a large body of opinion, and the feeling against the proposals now submitted were largely shared by the women of this country. Many women still clung to the old-fashioned notion of what was a woman's work, and would not care to take up duties which properly belonged to men. He was surprised that the promoters of the Bill had not recommended that women should be allowed to become Members of the House of Commons, as it was quite easy to suggest that there were many legislative matters in which their advice would be useful. He had always supported the plan of having a certain number of women factory inspectors, who were capable of performing a very valuable work, but he dissented from the view that in order to give women an opportunity of rendering useful service to the community they must be put in the same position as men on public bodies.

*CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) seconded the rejection of the Bill. The question was not, he said, a new one, and many hon. Members would recollect the discussions they had in 1899, when the London borough councils were formed, and the point was raised whether women should be allowed to be members or not. One of the arguments against their inclusion was that from the year 1894 down to the passing of the London Government Act of 1899, although women were eligible for election on vestry boards, only thirteen succeeded in getting the suffrages of the electors out of the fourteen or fifteen hundred seats that had to be filled. Again, it was pointed out that when the Bill which enabled women to sit on vestries came before the House, no mention was made of the fact that it contained any such proviso, and it was carried without the question being debated. In 1899, however, there were four different divisions in the House on the question, with the result that while women were given the right to sit on councils they were debarred from acting as mayor or alderman, and eventually, when the Bill came back from another place, even the right to sit as councillors was taken away from them. In 1900 another Bill, solely relating to London, was introduced to the House and was rejected by a very large majority, and in the course of the debates on it, it was pointed out that it would be very unfair that London boroughs should be singled out for special treatment in this matter, and that it would be better to deal with it from the point of view of the country as a whole.

They now had before them a proposal to put ladies on county councils and corporations throughout the country. That, certainly, was a more fair and straightforward method of dealing with the question. In the Memorandum attached to the Bill it was said that the object was to enable the electors to place directly-elected women on the education authorities. They knew very well that women, by the abolition of the school boards, were not enabled to seek the suffrages of the electors. But he would ask: had the education committees of the country been thereby in any way deprived of the most valuable co-operation of ladies? Was it not provided in the Education Bill that a very large proportion of the managers should be ladies? He, for one, fully appreciated the value of their co-operation on educational bodies, and that, he was glad to say, had been secured, and it was a very good thing also to secure their services in such matters as the management of female lunatic asylums, the employment of children, supervision of midwives and baby farms, and the prevention of cruelty to children. But matters of this nature —important though they were—did not constitute the duties carried out by municipal corporations. In London, on the Metropolitan Asylums Board, women were nominated for these duties, but he could not himself say that they were more qualified than men for such work as the laying of sewers. They were not better financiers, they were not more capable of framing by-laws, neither were they better able to deal with valuation matters; all this work was far more efficiently done by men. No doubt, in matters affecting the dietary of children, women were pre-eminently qualified, and for that reason one welcomed their co-operation in the administration of the Poor Law. But it was important to bear in mind that now-a-days, in all county and borough council elections, the element of politics was introduced, and one of the great objections he had to placing ladies on these public bodies was that it would involve them in the turmoil of political life.

Captain Jessel.

MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): How about the Primrose League?

*CAPTAIN JESSEL, continuing, said women were not, under the Bill, to be allowed to aspire to the office of mayor. He thought that was hardly logical. He was told it was because women could not act as justices of the peace, but if ladies were to be eligible as members of county and borough councils, why should they be excluded from the highest positions? On the previous evening there was a debate before the Hardwicke Society on the question of ladies being concerned in the administration of justice, and the question was asked: Why were not women eligible to sit on juries as well as men? Why should not there be mixed juries? It was interesting to know that the celebrated authoress, Mrs. Craigie — John Oliver Hobbes—said "she did not believe in women becoming entangled in legal machinery, because they were by nature unfair, and their natures did not contain the first elements of justice. Where, she asked, would men go for sympathy if women were impartial? When justice was represented as a woman she was blind-folded because she could not be trusted, as Americans said, to see straight."

The Second Reading of this Bill was moved by the junior Member for Northampton; he was sorry the senior Member for that town was not present, for he was a stalwart on this Question, and he believed he would have endorsed the view that the great majority of women did not wish to meddle with politics. They were quite ready to allow the management of municipal affairs to be carried on by men. It was, after all, only a few who were ambitious, for if there had been a general desire on the part of women to take part in the work of these councils larger numbers would have been councillors when they had the opportunity. Surely it was not wise to upset a whole general system for the sake of a very few. But the greatest objection of all to this proposal was that it was only the thin end of the wedge. It would not stop at this point, but they would have renewed agitation for the Parliamentary suffrage and eventually a claim for seats in the House. He opposed the Bill because he was averse to giving the Parliamentary suffrage to women, for he held that if they had votes it would be impossible to deny them the right to sit in the House. In all the great democratic Continental countries women were refused the Parliamentary suffrage, and he did not think that even the strongest advocate of the Bill would favour their admission to the House of Commons. He was glad to see a representative of the Local Government Board present (the hon. Gentleman the Member for Thirsk). It was not often that the Members who sat on the Treasury Bench honoured them on Friday afternoon. He hoped for guidance from that bench. It was not so much this Bill as the fact that it represented the beginning of the end. He objected to it in the interests of the vast majority of the women of this country. He did not believe that they desired it in the least. It was only brought in for the benefit of the few, and he would very much regret if, in consequence of the noisy clamour of those few, a Bill of that nature should be passed throwing on the sex positions and duties for which the great majority had no desire.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir William Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) regretted that the Bill did not apply to either Scotland or Ireland. He was anxious to see it extended to his country. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston—the champion of lost causes in that House——

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON: And of winning ones too.

*Mr. EUGENE WASON said the hon. Member spoke as if the Bill would force women to become members of municipal bodies. There was no compulsion at all in the matter. It was a mere question of giving them a legal right to exercise powers which, when they had undertaken them, they had exercised well. In Scotland they were not always anxious to have extended to them Acts passed for England. They never wanted, for instance, either the English Licensing Bill or the English Education Bill, because they had better Acts of their own. The Scottish Education Bill now before the House would, as in the past, still render women eligible to be elected on education boards. He could assure the House that feeling in Scotland, however, was in favour of the extension of the provisions of this Bill to that country. The Irish Members could, of course, speak for themselves. The hon. Member for South St. Pancras had alluded to the fact that in Germany and France the women had not these rights. That might be so, but then they did not need to go to those countries for lessons as to the policy they should pursue. Let them turn to their own self-governing Colonies. What did they see there? In New Zealand women had the privilege which he hoped they would soon possess in this country—of voting for Parliamentary representatives—and had exercised that right in a way that had kept a good strong Liberal Government in power. It was idle to talk about the thin end of the wedge. Those who knew and appreciated the good sense of the majority of women wished to give them the same rights and privileges that they themselves enjoyed, and for that reason he heartily supported the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Colonel WELBY (Taunton) said it had apparently escaped notice that Scotland and Ireland had been dropped out of this Bill. Was it because Scotchmen and Irishmen were much more impressionable, and could not be trusted to sit alongside the other sex? He thought that was a distinct slur on the male sex both of Scotland and Ireland, and it was a suggestion that they were not to be trusted in the same way as Englishmen. Did the promoters, by omitting Scotland and Ireland, hope to gain votes from Scotch and Irish Members?

*Dr. SHIPMAN said he was one of those who believed that each nation should look after its own affairs, and he had, therefore, confined the action of the Bill to England and Wales. But if it were desired that the Bill should apply to Scotland or Ireland he should welcome an Amendment in Committee to that effect.

*Colonel WELBY: Are we to understand that the great majority of the Scotch and Irish Members have no wish for this Bill? Has the hon. Member received representations to that effect?

*Dr. SHIPMAN: I have received no such representations at all. But if any are made those two countries can be included in the Bill.

*Colonel WELBY: Then why was the clause referring to Scotland and Ireland struck out of the Bill?

*Dr. SHIPMAN: I have been trying to give the reason.

*Colonel WELBY feared that the cause not the reason had been given. He had always been opposed to the Parliamentary vote being given to ladies, because he believed the logical conclusion was that they must obtain seats in that House. Everybody knew that the influence of women and their higher knowledge and skill were of very great importance in dealing with social questions. After all, it was the life of the home which was the foundation of the greater social life of the nation. The hon. Member for South St. Pancras had told them it was a very good thing for women to take part in particular portions but not in the general work of borough councils, but how was the line to be drawn in these? A distinct and absolute line could be drawn between representation in that House, where the affairs of the nation and the Empire were dealt with, and such service on councils as was proposed. He thought that if they went on opposing proposals that women should take part in social life it could be fairly urged against them that they were not seeking the good of the community, but were acting in prejudice against the other sex who, after all, in matters affecting their children and their social life could do infinitely better than men. He thought it would be a great mistake if they did not trust them.

Dr. Shipman.

Mr. SLACK considered that the speeches of the hon. Members who moved and seconded the rejection of the Bill were exceedingly illogical and inconclusive. It seemed to him that the Bill was a measure of very tardy justice, not only to women but to the whole system of the domestic government of this country. This matter was first prominently brought before the public mind in the London County Council elections of 1888, when two or three women were elected as aldermen and councillors. They worked on the Council for a considerable number of months, and, with perhaps one solitary exception, their male colleagues agreed that the work they did was absolutely invaluable if not indispensable. But by a decision of the Courts of Law they were disabled from continuing to sit, and since then the House had been constantly moved to remove the disability. The hon. Member for South St. Pancras had referred in terms which seemed to be particularly inapplicable just now—having regard to the part of London which he represented—to the unsuitability of women to discharge certain business functions connected with county and borough councils. He had the privilege of residing in the Parliamentary Borough of Holborn, which adjoined the hon. Member's own constituency.

Captain JESSEL: I did not say they could not discharge them. I simply said they were not better fitted than men to discharge them. I hope the hon. Member will not misinterpret what I said.

Mr. SLACK said they had had some startling revelations in Holborn recently, which showed how thoroughly incompetent men had proved themselves to be for the discharge of ordinary business duties. He was himself one of the unfortunate ratepayers who would probably lose thousands of pounds because of the proved incompetency of a borough council to properly look after some of their officials. Matters could not have been worse had women had seats on the council. The hon. and gallant Member had also objected to women being involved in the turmoil of political life, but he for one would far rather see women take their place in political and municipal life in a straightforward manner, by the exercise of the franchise and as was proposed in this Bill, than working as they did in many of the constituencies on behalf of the Primrose League. They had no objection to women being made eligible for the office of mayor, and if the Bill disqualified them—he did not think it did—the defect could be remedied in Committee. Then they had had an extraordinary quotation from Mrs. Craigie, a distinguished writer of fiction, who had shown that she could also speak fiction, and that very glibly and effectively. He was not going to take his views of public political life, public morality, or other subjects from Mrs. Craigie or any other novelist. When Mrs. Craigie told them that women were not meant to govern he would refer her to the most prominent and conspicuous member of her sex in the last century, Queen Victoria, who exercised a potent influence on the affairs of this Empire, and indeed of the whole Christian race. Further it was complained that the Bill would upset the general system for the sake of the few. But it would not do anything of the kind. It would simply enable duly qualified women to be nominated for seats on these councils in the same way as men; it would not involve the slightest change in administration, practice, or procedure. As to the antiquated and grossly immoral thin-end-of-the-wedge argument he could not too strongly condemn it. He remembered hearing, when a boy, orations by Mr. John Bright and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in that city; and one sentence used by the Member for West Birmingham in 1885 impressed itself very forcibly on his memory. It ran—"it is never wrong to do right." If the measure proposed by this Bill was right, it could not be wrong to carry it now. It was always right to do right, and the question of expediency should not be allowed to enter into these calculations at all.

The speech of the hon. Baronet who moved the rejection of the Bill answered itself. It spoke of the proper sphere of woman's work, but the hon. Baronet did not explain what that sphere was. He told them that women could be co-opted on education committees of county councils, and that the system of co-option was preferable to direct election, but he would like to point out in answer to that that the principle of co-option was mischievous because the co-opted member had not the same authority or responsibility to the ratepayers as the directly-elected representative. Women had done excellent work on boards of guardians, school boards, and the London vestries, and it seemed to him that the Bill opened up to women a sphere of usefulness for which they were peculiarly fitted. Reference had already been made to the services they might render in connection with housing, the inspection of women's lodging-houses, the female side of lunatic asylums, and the employment of children. The electors ought to have the fullest possible choice in the matter of their representatives on the bodies which had to deal with these questions, and they should be at liberty to choose women if they wished to do so. In all assemblies, municipal or Parliamentary, legislative or administrative, unrepresented interests were apt to go to the wall, and in the interests of men, women, and children he strenuously supported this Bill.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that when visiting large lunatic asylums as a member of the lunacy committee of his county council he had often regretted that the inspection could not be shared by lady visitors who could understand the circumstances and needs of the female inmates so much better than men. He believed that in many departments of local government an infusion of the woman element would be very valuable, and therefore he should certainly support the Second Reading of the Bill, and hope to see it extended to Scotland. Reference had been made to New Zealand. He had visited New Zealand since women were invested with the franchise, but his opinion of the result did not coincide with that which had been expressed, and he very much doubted whether the change had been altogether beneficial. If all married ladies as well as married men were entrusted with the franchise it might lead to awkward contentions, or tend to double the influence of married men. He was opposed to the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women, but as regarded their admission to local governing bodies and departments he thought it would be a great advantage, and therefore he supported this Bill.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he stood in a position which was probably a little exceptional among those who supported the Bill because he was an opponent of the principle of women's suffrage. That had always been his attitude, it was still so, and he would not be advocating the Second Reading of the measure before the House if he thought it would prove even a step in the direction of women's suffage. He did not, however, think that was the case. The question involved seemed to him to be a totally different one, and he did not think any opponent of women's suffrage should be influenced by his views in regard to that question in the direction of opposing the Bill before the House. He thought, indeed, opponents of women's suffrage ought, if anything, rather to be influenced the other way, for those to whom it would seem to be a great and perilous change to give women the right of voting at Parliamentary elections were, perhaps, all the more bound to do their utmost to see that women should be provided with such other spheres of influence as could be opened to them for devoting themselves in some measure to the service of the country by helping other women and children. He defended the Bill on the grounds of expediency. The question was a practical one, and the chief point at issue was as to whether women would be useful to the community if they were admitted to the boards mentioned in the Bill. It was, moreover, the right of the electors of the country to have the largest possible field of choice in those to whom they had to entrust the care of their municipal and county interests, and it was not fair to exclude any person willing to serve the community except on a strong proved case that it would for some reason be undesirable to accept such proffered services. Such *onus probandi* lay, surely, with the hon. Gentleman who had moved the rejection of the Bill, but the hon. Member for Preston had not even attempted to show that women would not be desirable members of these councils. On the other hand, there had been a good deal of practical evidence given which tended to show that women had done their special work on similar bodies very well. They had been specially valuable members of school boards, and one of his reasons for regretting the Education Act of 1902 was that it prevented women taking the same part as before in working the educational machinery of the country. Their services had, in some measure, been retained by making them co-opted members of education committees, but that was not the same thing, since they had not now the same authority they possessed when they sat as elected representatives of the ratepayers.

Women could do a vast amount of good work in matters affecting the housing and general well-being of the poor, and, as had several times been said in the course of the debate, in looking after the women and children in our lunatic asylums. There were, indeed, many kinds of such work in which, with the genius for detail which specially belonged to them, and their unwearied perseverance in making themselves masters of all that was to be known, women could make themselves very useful indeed—sometimes more useful than men engaged in similar work could be. The borough councils were not doing all the work they ought to do in that direction, and they would do it more efficiently if they had women among their members. At first he had some hesitation about supporting the Bill, because the borough councils had to some extent adopted a political character. But the possible risks in that direction were not sufficient to counterbalance the advantages which he saw in putting women upon the borough councils. When he looked at the whole field of educational and social reform he felt quite sure that the balance of argument was strongly in favour of the Bill. The sphere of action of women in all kinds of philanthropic and social work was increasing every day and was becoming more and more valuable to the community; and therefore he could not feel any doubt that the House would render a great service to the community, and not in any way injure the position of women, if they gave a Second Reading to this Bill.

*MR. TALBOT (Oxford University) associated himself with a great deal that had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen. He should support the Second Reading of the Bill, but he should do so as an opponent of female suffrage, and also with the hope, to which he should endeavour to give effect in Committee, that women would not be allowed to become members of county councils. He desired to restore to women a privilege they had already enjoyed, and which they had justified themselves in possessing. This was especially the case in London, where recent legislation had deprived them of the privilege they had previously possessed. Experience had shown that women had done excellent work in local and municipal government for which they deserved encouragement, and that encouragement could best be given by restoring to them the privilege they had accidentally lost. He could bear personal testimony to the excellent manner in which women had worked on local bodies, having worked side by side with them on the Metropolitan Asylums Board, on a board of guardians, and on education committees, on all of which bodies they did excellent work, and he had been struck by the fact that they always took a sensible view of affairs and applied themselves to that part of public work for which they were suited, without attempting to push themselves into work for which they were not suited. That was a compliment which could not always be paid to the other sex. But he might be asked why, if these were his views, he stopped short at the county councils. The reason was that on the county council they got into something approaching a political atmosphere, and with all his respect for women and their work, a political woman, whether Liberal or Conservative, was not a woman who commended herself to his personal judgment. He was not a member of the Primrose League. It might be said that that reflected no credit upon him, inasmuch as the efforts of that league would be somewhat out of place in the University of Oxford; but, at any rate, he had no desire to see the political woman multiplied. It was not right to sneer at the-thin-end-of-the-wedge argument if the thick end of the wedge represented something that was objectionable. But here experience had shown that women did excellent work on municipal bodies in connection with women, children, the destitute, and sanitation; but the same women did not take part in politics. They were not the same class. The woman who did good social and philanthropic work was not, as a rule, the woman who desired to take part in politics. If that was so, the "wedge" disappeared, and consequently there was no thick end, and the alleged thin end could do no harm. On the merits of the question he did not doubt the House would be doing right in supporting the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) pointed out that some of the strongest testimony that had been given as to the value of women's work on local bodies had been in connection with work under the control of the county councils, and, therefore, the statement of the last speaker that he was not prepared to go so far as to give women the right to sit on those bodies was a matter of surprise to most supporters of the Bill. One of the most painful duties connected with membership of a lunacy committee was that of visiting the wards containing women and children, and if ever men felt their helplessness it was then. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted the excellent work women did in connection with the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and yet he would not allow them an opportunity of doing similar work for the asylums in the country which were under the county or county borough councils. There were a number of committees connected with borough council work on which women could do good work. First of all, there was the education committee, of which at present they could become members only by co-option, a method which did not invest them with the influence or authority they would possess if elected directly by the ratepayers. Moreover, they were debarred from following their work through to the finish in the education authority itself, as they were not permitted to be members of that authority. The baths and washhouses department was also one in which there were splendid opportunities for the exercise of that knowledge which women alone possessed. He hoped the Bill would pass its Second Reading by a large majority and become law before the end of the present session.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) reminded the House that on the three bodies to which the hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division had referred women were already able to serve. By co-option they could be, and as a matter of fact, had to be, appointed on the education committees. With regard to baths and washhouses it was perfectly competent for ladies to be elected to act as visitors. The inspection of workhouses was never left to the lady members of boards of guardians, but lady visitors were appointed who were specially qualified for the work. As to the Asylums Board, his right. hon. friend had stated what excellent colleagues they made on the body.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) pointed out that that applied only to the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and not to the asylum committees of the county councils.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON (continuing) said that many of the supporters of the Bill were very lukewarm in their support, and his right hon. friend especially had hedged his approval with many qualifications. This Bill enabled women to be elected upon county and borough councils, and the metropolitan borough councils. He rather gathered that the chief argument in favour of this proposal was due to the fact that in former years ladies were able to sit upon the London vestries, and that they had lost ground to that extent. That was hardly the case, because it was a fact that ladies obtained that privilege by accident. When the Act was passed it was never intended that ladies should sit on the vestries, but, according to the wording of the Act, the Law Courts decided that ladies could become members of vestries. He would not say that women were incapable of discharging the duties with which the Bill proposed to entrust them; but he did say there would be no advantage in enabling them to become members of these various bodies, and this, he was quite sure, was the view held by the majority of women in these islands. He felt very strongly upon this question, and he considered that it was his duty to oppose it to the best of his ability. He thought that would be the view taken by the Government. By throwing these positions open to women they did not get the best of their class to come forward. His right hon. friend had stated his objection to the political lady, and in his opinion it was only the political lady who was likely to come forward under this Bill. The elections for county and borough councils had now become as much a political affair as any other election, and therefore they could not avoid bringing in the political ladies. The ladies who would be most likely to confine themselves to the special duties which came within their province hardly ever came forward. Ladies were useful on boards of guardians, but boards of guardians were not political bodies, although they were semi-political. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen said the *onus probandi* rested with those who thought that women were not fitted for this work, but all he could say was that the change proposed was one for which there was no warrant, and from which no advantage would be gained. He never supported any change unless he felt sure that it was going to produce good, and he hoped no hon. Member would support any change unless they thought it was likely to do good.

Mr. BRYCE said that his argument was that the electors of this country ought to have the widest possible choice, and it lay upon those who desired to limit that choice and the freedom of the electors in this respect to show why women should be excluded.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON said that argument appeared to him to amount to the contention that everybody ought to be eligible unless they could be shown incompetent for the post.

Mr. BRYCE: Not quite that.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON said that was practically what it amounted to. [An Hon. Member: Ladies sat upon the school boards.] Yes, they did, and many of them were now serving on the education committees, and what was more, the Act stated that a certain number of ladies must be placed upon those committees. A very considerable number of ladies were now acting as managers of schools under the Education Act. Women were too apt to go into enormous detail, and they could not carry on municipal business unless people confined themselves more to general principles. Women were more inclined than men to devote themselves to small petty details than to general principles. He doubted the statement that this Bill excluded a woman from being elected as mayor. There might be some difficulty as to whether a lady mayor could be a justice of the peace, but it appeared to him that, on the whole, the Bill was so worded that the position of mayor was one which could be occupied by a lady. The change proposed in this Bill was not one which would be for the benefit of the country, and he was convinced that it was not desired by anything approaching a majority of women of this country.

*Sir JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) said that on behalf of a considerable number of women in his constituency, who he hoped in years to come would become constituents in reality and not only in name, he wished to give very hearty support to this Bill. The arguments in favour of this Bill seemed to him to be strong and unanswerable, while those against were both sophisticated and feeble. He regarded this debate more as an "affair of outposts" in the general campaign for extending the Parliamentary suffrage to women. To-day the demand was a very modest one indeed. It was simply that women should be declared capable of sitting on county and borough councils, upon which it was argued that there was a large amount of work which they could perform a great deal better than men. There were special reasons why this Bill should be received with favour on the Ministerial side of the House, because the Conservative Party was pre-eminently the Party which recognised the qualifications of women to take part, not only in the details, but in the serious business of life. The Primrose League had been spoken of. That gigantic organisation, which was founded for the purpose of upholding religion, the Estates of the Realm, and the Imperial ascendancy of the British Empire—that great league, charged with the furtherance of these great objects, was largely comprised of women. Over that organisation the Prime Minister himself presided, and with him acted not only a male executive, but also a female executive, known as the Ladies' Grand Council, which doubtless assisted him in furthering the interests of that great mission which this league was founded to promote. This circumstance in itself conceded the principle on this side of the House that women were qualified to take part in the work of executive government, and the Prime Minister agreed with that principle. He was sorry to see that afternoon that hon. Members were going back upon their chief, and upon the Ladies' Grand Council, by declaring by their opposition to this Bill that the same women who were fit to sit upon a council charged with the furtherance of such great Imperial and national responsibilities were not qualified to take any part in the comparatively trivial business of the local councils of the counties and towns. But there were other councils besides the Ladies' Grand Council which claimed to take some part in shaping the destinies of their country. There were numerous women's trades councils representing hundreds of thousands of working women, who were bread winners, and who were pressing forward to take some part in the selection of those who made the laws which regulated the conditions under which they laboured, and under the security of which the bread of themselves and their families was won. He hoped the House would recognise the strength and sincerity of this movement by not resisting that instalment of its accomplishment which passing the Second Reading that day would provide.

Mr. BENN (Devonport) mentioned that during the first year of its existence the London County Council had the great advantage of the presence of three most able women as members. Owing to a decision of the Judges the Council were deprived of their assistance, and year after year ever since the County Council had sent petitions to the House asking that the law should be so amended that they could again enjoy the advantages of such services. He had known women connected with school board work who considered it a great privilege to appeal to the electors and get fresh inspiration from them. It was true that such women had been co-opted and placed upon the education committee by the London County Council. Speaking on behalf of that body he desired to inform the House that they considered this amended plan of co-optation as a degradation and an inconvenience, and he asked that those women should have restored to them those rights and privileges which they formerly enjoyed. He was sorry that the hon. Member for St. Pancras had spoken so slightingly of the services of women on the old London vestries. For a great many years they rendered really valuable services to London as members of those bodies. With regard to the work of women on the old London vestries the Prime Minister once said—

> "It does seem hard that when women have been engaged in a particular work, and have carried out that work in a satisfactory manner, the House should take the occasion of a great reform to restrict their sphere of usefulness."

He could not put it more forcibly than that. He ventured to urge the acceptance of the Bill on the ground of purity of administration. Corruption was creeping into some of our public bodies, and the presence of women on those bodies would check the increase of that corruption. Lord Salisbury, speaking in the House of Lords on this subject, declared that—

> "In the presence of women on these councils you have a security against indolence and against selfish administration which you will not have if they are removed."

They sadly needed the services of good and able women on some of their public bodies, the administration of which would be strengthened and purified by their presence.

Mr. Benn.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he felt a special obligation to say a few words in support of this Bill, because he had always thought that one great, though unavoidable, blemish in the Education Act of 1902 was that it deprived the country of the advantage of women on the governing body in education. It was quite true that the best that could be done was done by making it compulsory upon the new education authorities to place women on the education committees, but he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for Aberdeen that that was not a complete substitute for their former powers on school boards. He could not speak too highly of the work done in the education of the people by women. In the training and development of infants and very young children the experience and authority of women was absolutely invaluable. The House was probably not aware of the silly and stupid things which were done day after day in multitudes of our infants' schools because those schools, although they had a mistress at the head of them, were practically managed by male inspectors, who knew nothing about infants and went into the schools with the preconceived notion that they were only diminutive men or diminutive women. He had the most earnest desire to see women made eligible for election to borough and county councils, because those bodies now administered the Education Acts, and he knew of no real reason why they should be excluded from those bodies. It seemed to him that all their past experience was against any attempt to restrict the choice of the electors in this respect. Besides the experience he had had with school authorities, he had had considerable experience in and out of boards of guardians, and he did not think men were so well qualified to do a great deal of the work which was done by boards of guardians as women were. Happily they were still on boards of guardians, but there was a proposal in the air to vest the powers of these boards in the municipal authorities as had been done in the case of education. If that was done it was all the more important that women should be made eligible for municipal councils.

His right hon. friend the Member for Oxford University desired to exclude women from county councils because these bodies were partly political. If they were they ought not to be. He hoped that in the growing intelligence of the age and nation politics would be as much banished from county councils as they were from boards of guardians and from the best municipal authorities. It was bad enough that this House should be political. They had experience of the discredit that was cast upon the House of Commons because of its political character. He should have the greatest possible pleasure in voting in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill. The question of women's franchise seemed to him to have nothing to do with the question dealt with in this measure. During his political life, ever since John Stuart Mill moved his famous Amendment to the Representation of the People Act of 1866, he had steadily voted in favour of the enfranchisement of women. But that question had nothing to do with this Bill. The whole question was whether the electors were or were not to be curtailed in their choice of representatives.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said he desired to associate himself with what had been said by his right hon. friend with regard to the question of the Parliamentary franchise for women. This Bill had nothing to do with that. As a Member for a Scotch constituency he regretted that Scotland was not included in the scope of the Bill, and he thought if the Bill went to a Committee an Amendment should be moved to include that country. His right hon. friend had not referred to a matter in which they had both been much concerned, viz., the question of the employment of children in various capacities outside of school hours, and more especially to street selling. He could not imagine any subject on which the views of women would be more useful and helpful to the local authorities. In the particular matter of education it seemed perfectly absurd to say that women were not useful in guiding the education of the young, and especially of young girls. There were also such questions as public lodging-houses, industrial schools, the regulations relating to midwives, sanitation and public health, with respect to which the advice and co-operation of women were not only useful and helpful, but even essential. This little Bill would do only a tardy act of justice to women by conferring on them the position of which they were robbed by the present Government, when by the London Government Act they were barred from giving those services to the State which they were so eminently qualified to give. The hon. Member for Hackney seemed to have had an extraordinary experience of women. The hon. Member went so far as to say that there was no warrant for what the Bill proposed, and that no advantage would be reaped from it. It was a self-evident proposition that women had conferred immense advantage by their counsel on those boards of which they had been members.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said his hon. and gallant friend the Member for South St. Pancras had asked for the guidance of the Government in this matter. Were there to be no questions upon which the Government were to be allowed to have an open mind? The question of the capacity of women to administer public affairs divided men into hostile camps almost as much as the question of religion; and if women had to wait for their enfranchisement until a Government were agreed upon it he was afraid they would have to wait a very long time. He was not to be taken as speaking for the Government. This was a question upon which nothing was to be done in this Parliament by this Government. Indeed he might go so far as to say that this was a question upon which nothing was ever to be done in any Parliament by any Government. But he himself had always been in favour of women being admitted as freely as possible to administrative bodies. He might have risen in the House at least twenty times to express those views, but Mr. Speaker, in the exercise of his privilege, and knowing he was then a bachelor, had not called upon him to speak. He had no reason to change those views from his experience of the last three years. In this matter he might be called a "whole-hogger." He was in favour of giving the Parliamentary franchise to women, although he doubted whether the House of Commons was a place in which they ought to be allowed to sit. There was a county council in this country which had always tried to be a legislative assembly. It had to work through the machinery of this House at present, but, as a rule, county councils were not legislative assemblies. But while he thought that women might properly be excluded from the making of laws, they might, upon local bodies, be very safely entrusted with the administration of those laws. He should like to say a word about the thin-end-of-the-wedge argument on this question which was always brought up, and which had again appeared to-day. What was the danger of the wedge? It was said that if it was inserted in the way proposed now, it might be driven home in ways which would change the conditions in the whole sphere of society. The progress of the wedge had been remarkably slow. Reference had been made by the hon. Member for Berwickshire to the fact that women were not on municipal councils, but he would remind him that it was not this House which excluded them. The House of Lords laid that down.

MR. TENNANT: May I remind the hon. Member that the Government tellers were put on when the Motion was put to agree with the Lords' Amendment?

MR. GRANT LAWSON said the hon. Member was technically correct, but in spirit he was incorrect. The question was whether they should agree with the Lords' Amendment, or whether at the end of the session they should drop that big and important Bill. The Leader of the House decided that it was better not to fight with the other branch of the Legislature on this particular point in the Bill. In order to get the Bill through at once the objection to the Lords' Amendment was waived, and that was practically why the Government Whips were put on to tell in favour of it.

He wished to deal with the strange position which was created by women being allowed, as they were allowed, to sit on urban district councils, and not on borough councils. He did not feel that he could define the distinction between the administrative conditions of urban and borough councils. It did not consist in the importance of the districts over which they ruled. Willesden for example, with a population of over 114,000, had an urban district council, while Hendon, with 1,100 inhabitants, was a borough. There were many instances throughout the country of urban councils to which women might be elected, and of borough councils to which they could not be elected, though in the urban districts the population might be greater and the powers exercised practically the same. He knew of no sufficient distinction between the two which gave women the right to sit on the one and not on the other. There were many duties in both administrative bodies upon which women's influence and knowledge could be most usefully employed. In the question of housing, women as guardians had done useful work for the pauper class; why should they not be allowed to give equally good service to the class above? A woman was far more likely to know whether the kitchen and scullery arrangements were of a convenient kind. Under the Factory Acts women were appointed as inspectors, and it was recognised that they were well qualified to discharge the duties. He was sure no one would wish to go back on that policy. Surely the matters to which they gave their attention could be well regulated by women in council. To enforcing the Food and Drugs Act women would give much activity, for women were the caterers for working-class households and suffered most from the adulteration of food. He thought if women could sit on the borough councils some of the councils would be keener to take samples of food with the view to the prosecution of the offenders. By-laws which affected social habits came peculiarly within the province of women. Recently a council applied for sanction to a by-law requiring all dust-bins to be placed on the kerb at seven in the morning, a by-law that certainly no woman would support. Why, if women were so useful as guardians in relation to infirmaries, should they not assist in the administration of hospitals and asylums? There were 8,000 female lunatics in our asylums, yet no woman could as a matter of right sit on the committees to look after the affairs of those asylums. Regulations in regard to the employment of and prevention of cruelty to children were especially fitted for the consideration of women. Many of the duties devolving on local authorities were such as a wise councillor would consult his wife, mother, or grandmother upon; and where municipal interference was forced upon homes women had a right to be heard.

When it was urged that women could have no knowledge of roads and bridges, he replied, What did the average county councillor know of the subject? He acquired his knowledge as he went on; and a woman was not less apt than a man to acquire information from her surroundings. Women had stronger reasons than men for desiring that the high roads should be properly constructed. When he was a member of a highways committee he learned that what caused most of the mud was that too much use was made of certain filling-in material. He fancied that if women were on county councils there would not be so much of this unnecessary filling-in material used. In the regulation of traffic who could better judge than women of the corners where motors at high speed would be dangerous to women and children pedestrians? There was no question of dragging women into political conflicts; they were there already. They exercised considerable influence in politics, and he did not doubt that many Members in the House owed their seats to that influence. Would opponents go so far as to allow women to sit as aldermen, avoiding the horrors of a contested election? In municipal matters women had politics thrust upon them, they had votes, and after all, there was nothing to prevent a man or woman retiring from political life. There was no compulsion in this Bill. The great beauty of public life was that they did not require to go into it unless they liked. It should be noticed that Irishmen had shown their gallantry by electing women to local bodies wherever it was possible to do so.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): We would have them in this House if we could.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON said they wanted on these local bodies all the earnest, public-spirited, leisured people they could find, for the work was growing as year by year new duties were cast upon them. It was a pity the barrier of sex should shut out a large resource, and he should vote for the Bill.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said his hon. friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board had for once departed from that sound common-sense which always distinguished him. He had advocated this Bill on the ground that gallantry came into it. That might be one of the reasons for which he himself objected to it. If his hon. friend happened to sit on a borough council with a charming lady would he contradict her if he thought she was in error? He did not think gallantry came into the question at all. It was a question of the merits and the demerits of women, and of the practicability of putting them on certain public bodies. As a rule the majority of women did not desire to be put on these bodies. They could exercise their usefulness in many other directions. There was no doubt that they did exercise a very great influence on elections, but they exercised it in a totally different manner to what they would do if put on administrative or legislative bodies. An hon. Member had said that unless the electors wanted them they would not be elected. Every Member of this House knew perfectly well that a great many of the electors would not take any trouble to vote either at a county council or a borough council election, and consequently the true feeling of the electors was not really ascertained. No doubt a certain number of women would come forward, and no doubt a great number of people would not take the trouble to go to the poll. The hon. Member for Leicester said that the business transacted by the borough councils and the county councils was of a very trivial nature. He disagreed with the hon. Member altogether. He considered that it was of a most important character. During the last thirty years the municipal debt of the country had risen from somewhere about £90,000,000 to over £400,000,000. Were women economically likely to reduce that expenditure? His experience of women—[Laughter]—he might not be so fortunate as his hon. friends—[Laughter]—but he had a certain experience with women, and he believed that, as a rule, they were not economical. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] He believed further, that such was their temperament, their kind-heartedness, and sentimentality, that if they considered a certain thing was right—he did not deny that it might be right—they would say, "Never mind what it costs, it is a good thing, and let us have it." Therefore, he did not think it would be at all advisable to put women on borough councils and county councils, as they would encourage the already extravagant habits of those particular bodies.

They had heard from the right hon. Member for Cambridge University a long and excellent speech in which he recommended the adoption of the Bill on the ground that women had done good service on educational bodies. Nobody denied that; but he did not see that they would be deprived of the opportunities of doing such service if this Bill did not pass. They might be able to superintend schools, even if they did not sit on borough councils or county councils. His right hon. friend discoursed largely on various matters at which the ladies were good—inspecting kitchen ranges, and seeing whether the food was bad. But he would ask his right hon. friend whether a woman as an inspector would not have much more power in regard to such matters in bringing them to the notice of county councils and borough councils than if she were a member of such bodies. The hon. Member for Hackney had made some allusion as to what would happen if this Bill passed and women became aldermen or mayors. He did not attach much importance to that. The hon. Gentleman was very much upset by the idea that if the borough councils or county councils ordered that the refuse of households should be put on the pavement at seven o'clock in the morning, the women on the councils would vote that the order should not be passed. Now, he thought that that was a very strong argument for not putting women on these bodies.

Hon. Members who had supported this Bill had admitted that they were in favour of the Parliamentary franchise being given to women and of women sitting in this House. That was really at the bottom of the whole of this agitation. One hon. Member had said that this Bill was only a step in a certain direction, and his argument was that if they once admitted women to the county and borough councils they would have to go further and admit them as members of the Legislature. He thought it would be an extremely evil day for the country when that was done. He did not wish to decry for a moment the good work which women did, or were capable of doing, in the management of the different affairs of life; but he had not heard a single argument to show that women were in any kind of way better than men. The hon. Member for Devonport had argued that there was some practical reason for passing this Bill, because a few years ago three women had sat on the London County Council. No doubt these were very exceptional women, of very great ability, but that was a very shallow argument to put forward in favour of giving every woman in the country an opportunity of sitting on borough and district councils. He hoped the House would not accept the Bill, especially on a Friday, when very few Members were present. He was sorry that so few Members had thought it worth their while to come forward to oppose the Bill by their voice and vote; and the only conclusion he could come to was that on Friday afternoon the majority of Members regarded such Bills as this as the expression of a pious opinion which was not likely to come into force. He was glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General present in the House, and he did not think that on such an important Bill as this the House should be deprived of the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, who had such great opportunities of studying the capabilities of women.

*Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said that he had invariably voted against any Bill proposing to give female suffrage; but he should vote for this Bill because he believed it would afford women an opportunity of serving on local bodies which might be regarded as training schools and thereby proving their fitness, if they had any, for occupying posts in public life. Having explained the reason why he could not give a silent vote he would not delay the division.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 175; Noes, 25. (Division List No. 98.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Ambrose, Robert
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Kenneth R.(Christch.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cogan, Denis J.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward(Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Faber, George Denison (York)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N. E.)
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Haldane, Rt. Hn. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (MerthyrTydvil
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West
Horniman, Frederick John
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P (Cavan, W
Kitson, Sir James
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks NR
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Lewis, John Herbert

Sir Frederick Banbury.

Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E(Wigt'n
Morley, Rt Hn. John(Montrose
Morrell, George Herbert
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Nolan, Col. John P.(Galway,N
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon,N)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R Threshie (Dumfries)
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, John H.(Denbighs)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B)
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spencer, Rt Hn C R (Northants
Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Rt Hn J.G (Oxf'd Univ.
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomson, F.W. (York, W. R.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wallace Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Welby, Lt-Col A C.E.(Taunton)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Dr. Shipman and Mr. Slack.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt Sir Alex. F.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Atkinson, Rt. Hn. John
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Campbell, Rt. Hn J A (Glasgow)
Delany, William
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Forster, Henry William
Gordon, Hn. J E (Elgin&Nairn)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Kilbride, Denis
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth
Milvain, Thomas
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Pierpoint, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reddy, M.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, John

Tellers for the Noes—Sir William Tomlinson and Captain Jessel.

Main Question put,

The House divided:—Ayes, 171; Noes, 21. (Division List. No. 99.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex.F.
Ambrose, Robert
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thos. Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cogan, Denis J.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohan, Benjamin Louis
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Nott.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Faber, George Denison (York)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson Rt. Hn. Sir J.(Manc'r
Findlay Alexander(Lanark,NE
Finlay, Sir R B.(Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)

Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kitson, Sir James
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose
Morrell, George Herbert
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, S. Ford
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Dr. Shipman and Mr. Slack.

NOES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Campbell Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Delany, William
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Forster, Henry William
Kilbride, Denis
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Milvain, Thomas
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Pierpoint, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reddy, M.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, John

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir William Tomlinson and Captain Jessel.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Dr. Shipman.*)

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceedings, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Monday next.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) moved that the House do now adjourn. Vote 1 of the Army Estimates would be proceeded with on Monday as the first order.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn" (Sir A. Acland-Hood) put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-three minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 3rd April, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: —Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Hessle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Morley Corporation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received To-morrow.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Forty-seventh Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended December 31st, 1904.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3332. Mexico; No. 3333. Germany.

(MISCELLANEOUS).

No. 632. Silk trade and yield of cocoons in Italy in 1904.

ARMY.

Return showing number and cost of small arms, sword bayonets, machine guns, etc., manufactured in the Royal Small Arms Factories at Enfield and Birmingham, and by the trade, during the past ten years; also the number of men employed in the two Government Factories for the same period, and their wages.

NATIONAL GALLERY (IRELAND).

Report of the Director to the Board of Governors and Guardians, for the year 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on March 31st, 1905, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27 and 28 Victoria, chap. 43, 45 and 46 Victoria, chap. 51, and 50 and 51 Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended December 31st, 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (MERTHYR TYDFIL SCHEME CONFIRMATION) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order). The Amendments proposed by the Select Committee made. Standing

Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received to-morrow.

SERVICE OF MILITIAMEN BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY moved to amend sub-section (1), which provides that any part of the Regular Militia when embodied shall, notwithstanding any enactment to the contrary, be liable to serve in any place out of the United Kingdom, and accordingly to be carried or ordered to go out of the United Kingdom, by the addition of the following words: "It being understood that, should they thus be carried or ordered out of the United Kingdom, a bounty of not less than thirty days pay and allowances shall be given to every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man on embarkation." He said he made no apology for asking their Lordships to consider this Amendment, because the Bill as it stood was likely to have a very deleterious effect on recruiting for the Militia. He was quite certain that the whole difficulty could be met by a system of bounties. It so happened that he could give their Lordships a concrete case from his own experience. At the end of the Indian Mutiny there was a mutiny of European troops. The Government had taken them over without giving them a bounty, they having previously been enlisted for the East India Company's service. On the matter being gone into it was found that the troops were in the right and that an injustice had been done. The consequence was that the Indian Government were put to the expense of sending the whole of the troops in question back to England. After they had had a short holiday at home, the Government offered them a bounty, which they ought to have done in the first instance, and the result was that nearly the whole of the men re-engaged, the Government then having to incur the expense of conveying them back to India. He understood that at the present moment when Militiamen were asked to volunteer for foreign service a bounty was given, but it was not given as a matter of right as it should be, but as a favour. His Amendment would secure that when they were called upon they should receive as a right the moderate bounty of a month's pay and allowances. Objection might be raised to the Amendment on the ground that it involved a money payment, and was therefore a breach of the priviliges of the other House; but this could be easily met by an undertaking on the part of the Government that when the Bill reached the House of Commons they would introduce an Amendment with this object. Such a provision would, he was convinced, prove a great advantage in recruiting, and would be an act of common justice.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, after the word 'Kingdom' to insert the words 'it being understood that, should they thus be carried or ordered out of the United Kingdom, a bounty of not less than thirty days pay and allowances shall be given to every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man on embarkation.'" (*The Earl of Galloway.*)

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, I can assure the noble Earl that I am entirely sympathetic with the objects which have impelled him to move this Amendment, but I think he rather under-estimates the value of the present system. By an Army Order made in 1900, any Militiaman embarking for South Africa or any place outside the United Kingdom, received a bounty of £1 on embarkation. That Army Order has not been repealed, and I think it fully meets the view of the noble Earl. We also recognise the claims of the officer. Officers in the late war received a gratuity of £100 for each year of service abroad, and Reserve officers received the same grant. Therefore I think it will be admitted that we can and do already carry out the wishes of the noble Earl without the necessity for legislation. The noble Earl says that the bounty under the Army Order of 1900 is given as a favour and not as a matter of right. I cannot follow him in that definition. As long as this Army Order remains in existence the bounty will be given as in the past, and therefore I hope the noble Lord will not see any necessity to press his Amendment. I do not want to take my stand purely on a technical objection, but I cannot believe that such a provision as this is permissible in a Bill introduced in your Lordships' House. I do not wish to in any way belittle the privileges of your Lordships' House, but it seems to me that this is essentially an Amendment which should emanate from the representatives of the people. I hope that in the circumstances the noble Earl will not press his Amendment.

The Earl of GALLOWAY expressed the hope that the noble Earl would take care that the intention of the Government was made known to the recruiting sergeants.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: I should think recruiting sergeants would be fully aware of this Army Order. They are generally alive to anything that helps them to collect recruits. I will have inquiries made into the matter, and if there is any reason to suspect that they are not fully aware of the Army Order, I will have it brought to their notice.

The Earl of GALLOWAY withdrew his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the Committee withdrawn.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Remaining Clause agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, this is a very short Bill, with only one operative clause. It does not involve any complicated question of drafting, and I hope, therefore, the House will consent to negative the Standing Committee.

Moved, "That the Standing Committee be negatived." — (*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 3rd April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—North British Railway (General Powers) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

Cork Junction Railways Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Woolwich Borough Council Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Bute; and Milnathort; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Birkenhead, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Sidcup, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Messingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from West Didsbury, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Forty-seventh Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland for the year ended 31st December, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL GALLERY (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Director of the National Gallery of Ireland to the Board of Governors and Guardians for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS FUND.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th March; *Dr. Macnamara*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 108.]

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st December, 1904, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 109.]

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Return showing number and cost of small arms, sword bayonets, machine guns, etc., manufactured in the Royal Small Arms Factories at Enfield and Birmingham, and by the trade, during the past ten years; also the number of men employed in the two Government Factories for the same period and their wages [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 632 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3332 and 3333 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Licensing Compensation—London County Council and City Corporation.

MR. BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the annual amount withdrawn from the possible London Compensation Fund, under the Licensing Act of 1904, by the action of the City of London in maintaining a jurisdiction apart from the county of London.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) If the intention of the Question is to ascertain the maximum amount which can be levied in the City of London under the Licensing Act, 1904, I may say that I understand that it has been estimated at about £25,000; which is about one-ninth of the amount that can be levied in the county of London, outside the City. The City of London has always been a separate licensing jurisdiction.

Purchase of Mansion of Ballyhaise by Irish Board of Agriculture.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Department of Agriculture have purchased the mansion of Ballyhaise and 800 acres of demesne ornamental grounds and tillage land in the county of Cavan as an experiment; what is the purchase money; and what is the purpose of this experiment.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the approval of the Agricultural Board was obtained to the purchase of Ballyhaise mansion and demesne; if this property belonged to Mr. Humphreys; if the Board were informed before the transaction that Mr. Humphreys was a nephew by marriage of one of their number; if the Vice-President pressed the purchase; and how the purchase price between Mr. Humphreys and the Department was ascertained.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department, with the approval of the Agricultural Board, have purchased the house and demesne for the sum of £19,000. The property will be utilised as a centre for the breeding of live stock in connection with the Department's schemes, and for the instruction of young men in practical agriculture. The Board were aware that the property belonged to Mr. Humphreys. One of the members of the Board was indirectly interested in it, but he retired from the Board Room when the question of its acquisition was considered. The Vice-President did not press the purchase in the manner suggested. The purchase price was based on an independent valuation of the property.

Keown Boyd Estate, County Down.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the matter of the Keown Boyd Estate, county Down, the Land Judge accepted the offer of the tenants to purchase in November, 1903; and if he can state the cause of the delay in having the purchase completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) No, Sir, but the Land Judge approved of terms on which the tenants were to repurchase from the Estates Commissioners if the latter should acquire the estate. The making of a formal offer for the estate has been held over, so that two tenants who had not signed undertakings to purchase might have an opportunity of doing so. The Commissioners expect to make shortly an offer to the Land Judge.

Technical and Agricultural Schemes in County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that, owing to the disagreement existing between the Agricultural and Technical Department and the Congested Districts Board, the working of technical and agricultural schemes in the county of Kerry and elsewhere will be paralysed by reason of the refusal of grants for congested districts, he can take any steps to secure an understanding between these Departments in the public interest, so that local effort in Kerry and other counties shall not be rendered useless.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) There is no disagreement between the Department and the Congested Districts Board. The Department's agricultural scheme applies equally to the entire county, and their scheme of technical instruction is also applicable over congested and non-congested areas. The Congested Districts Board subsidise their own schemes of industrial work in the congested districts, but they have no funds to assist the county scheme of technical instruction in these districts.

Purchase of Estates outside Connaught or the Congested Districts.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any, and if so how many, cases of the purchase of congested estates by the Estates Commissioners have yet taken place outside of Connaught or the congested districts by the Estates Commissioners; and, if no such case has yet occurred, whether he can state if the Commissioners intend to apply the section of the Land Act of 1903 dealing with congested estates in districts outside the area referred to.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Estates Commissioners have not as yet purchased any congested estates in any district. Of course it is their intention to put in force the provisions of the Act when occasion offers.

Offer of Seed Potatoes to Irish Board of Agriculture by Mr. Williamson, of Mallow.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Williamson, of Mallow, a seed potato specialist, has offered to supply free of cost to the Irish Agricultural Department one ton of a new variety of potato, styled Duchess of Cornwall, for the purpose of having its merits fully tested in their experimental trials this year; and if he can explain why the offer has been refused, having regard to the fact that the Department have already decided to include this variety of potato in their trials this season; and whether the offer of Mr. Williamson will be reconsidered and accepted.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department do not consider it advisable to accept from seed merchants or seed growers gratuitous supplies of seeds for the purposes of experiment. The Department have already a sufficient supply of the variety mentioned. They are not prepared to reconsider Mr. Williamson's offer.

Date of Publication of First Annual Report of the Estates Commissioners.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state when the First Annual Report of the Estates Commissioners relative to the working of the Irish Land Act of 1903 will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Report will be very shortly issued, but I cannot fix a date.

Construction of Moher Relief Road.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it is intended that the construction of the Moher relief road, county Cavan, is to be proceeded with; and, if not, will he explain why.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I understand that the guardians have discontinued the construction of this road owing to the refusal of the solicitors to the owner of the property through which the road passes to permit further work upon it.

Case of Denis Connolly, of Borrisnoe.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that on the night of October 3rd last an emergency man named Denis Connolly, of Borrisnoe, was caught in the act of stealing cabbage from the haggart of Daniel Greed residing near the same place; that he was accompanied by Constables Neary and Buckley; that Constable Buckley subsequently asked the Greeds to say nothing about the occurrence, and, on being refused, threatened them; that, a few days later, Head Constable Fallon came to the Greeds, and under the pretext of an investigation obtained from Cornelius Greed a statement of the facts; and that the magistrates at the trial, where Connolly pleaded guilty, expressed their opinions that these constables should have been brought forward as witnesses, and for their production adjourned the trial for a fortnight; and, if so, will he say what order was subsequently made in the case of Connolly, were the constables produced at trial, was any investigation held, and where are those constables stationed at present; and will he take steps to hold an investigation into all the facts of the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The facts, as I understand them, are briefly these: Connolly entered the land of Greed, and pulled two cabbage plants. Connolly is under personal police protection, and at the time of the occurrence was six or eight yards in advance of his escort (Constables Neary and Buckley). The larceny took place at 9 o'clock on a dark night, and the constables had no reason to believe that Connolly entered the field for the purpose stated. Constable Buckley did ask Greed not to prosecute Connolly, but no threats were used as alleged. The Head Constable subsequently, in the discharge of his duty, called on Greed in order to investigate the facts, and Greed voluntarily stated the facts. When the case came before the magistrates on October 24th, they adjourned it for the attendance of the constables. The constables were examined at the adjourned hearing, and Connolly was fined 10s. and costs, and also ordered to pay 2d. compensation for the theft of the cabbage. The constables are now stationed in the Roscrea district. The matter was very fully considered by the Inspector-General and by my predecessor in December last, and it was decided that no further investigation was called for.

Railway Rates and Transit Facilities in Ireland.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that a Resolution dealing with excessive railway rates and defective transit facilities generally, which constitute a serious bar to the material advancement of Ireland, was unanimously adopted by the House of Commons on the 15th March last, he will appoint a Vice-Regal Commission to inquire into the question; or in the alternative, whether he will bring in a Bill this session to extend the powers of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, with the view to reducing the traffic rates in Ireland and making the companies work as one service, and for that purpose also provide a State Guarantee to ensure the shareholders against any loss that may at first arise.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The reply to these Questions is in the negative.

Slavery in the East Africa Protectorate.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state whether, on the transfer to the Colonial Office of the East Africa Protectorate, inquiry can be made as to the possibility of abolishing in the coast strip the legal *status* of slavery, in accordance with the policy hitherto general in the colonies and protectorates under the Colonial Office as well as in India.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Inquiry will be made, but it will be remembered that we are bound by an assurance which was given by Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1895, to the effect that the Law of Islam would be maintained.

Rules for use of Commercial Mole at Gibraltar.

Mr. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the rules affecting the use of the commercial mole at Gilbraltar have been decided upon; and whether representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, or of the mercantile community generally, will be included in the board of management.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) A scheme for the administration of the commercial mole at Gibraltar has been drawn up with the assistance of four members of the mercantile body. It provides for full and direct Government control, but the Government will accept for consideration suggestions from accredited representatives of the Exchange Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, and the general trading community on matters of details affecting them as customers.

Premier Diamond Mine Profits.

Mr. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Premier Diamond Mine has declared a dividend on its share capital for the half year amounting to £210,000; and, if so, will he say whether the remaining 60 per cent. of the profits, amounting to £315,000, to which the Transvaal Government is entitled, will be paid at the same time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have received a telegram from Lord Milner on this subject, the meaning of which is not clear and I have asked for explanations. If the hon. Member will repeat his Question this day week I hope to be able to afford him the information he desires.

Promotion in the Telegraph Service.

Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): To ask the Postmaster-General if, in view of the fact that a deputation of telegraphists were recently informed that he intended adding to the number of the class of clerks immediately above the general body, and of the stagnation of promotion existing throughout the service, he will state when he hopes to make the change; and whether seniority and efficiency will be taken into consideration in deciding on cases to be promoted.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not at present able to state when the change will take place, as the inquiries are not yet completed. The officers selected for promotion will be those who are certified to be best qualified for the duties to be performed.

Hours of Postmen's Duties.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the rule is still in force which allows postmen's duties being made up to occupy seven and a-half hours so as to allow for prolonged deliveries.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) There is no such rule: and, so far as I am aware, there never has been. Forty-eight hours a week is the normal attendance for town postmen: but, on a revision, the duties are usually arranged so as to occupy somewhat less than that time, in order to allow for general increase of work.

Number, Size, and Weight of Parcels included in Letter Delivery.

Mr. CROOKS: To ask the Postmaster-General what is the rule of the Department regarding the number, size, and weight of parcels postmen have to take out on a letter delivery.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley,*) When parcels are delivered with letters the rule is that the total combined weight should not exceed 35 lbs. per postman, and that, as far as possible, town postmen on letter deliveries should not be required to take out bulky or very heavy parcels which would hamper or delay them. The number of parcels taken out on a letter delivery varies according to the nature of the delivery, but on important town deliveries it is the practice to limit the number to five, as far as circumstances admit.

Postal Facilities at Trillick, County Tyrone.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the village of Trillick, county Tyrone, has but one delivery of letters daily; that the mid-day mail passes the village and carries the mails eight miles further on to Ballinamallard, where they lie until next morning; and if a scheme for a second delivery can, under the circumstances, be devised.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I regret to find that, owing to the high cost of the postal service at Trillick, I should not be justified in incurring additional expense in providing a second delivery there.

Piece-work System in the Post Office Telegraph and Telephone Factory.

Mr SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that the carpenters and joiners obtaining employment at the Post Office telegraph and telephone factory, Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell, after serving one month probationary period, passing a satisfactory medical examination, and being vaccinated in accordance with the requirements of the establishment, are required as an absolute condition of further employment to execute the work at prices which they have no voice in arranging on what is known as the piece-work system, he will take steps to bring the conditions of labour for joiners in this factory into harmony with that of private employers who pay by the hour, and so enable trade unionists to participate in this Government work without violating the local rules of the district and the general rules of their respective societies.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not prepared to abandon the piece-work system in the Post Office factory.

Tea Reliefs in Liverpool Post Office.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, upon certain duties at Liverpool among the telegraphists, a period of ten minutes is allowed for tea reliefs; and whether he will consider the advisability of extending the period in the interests of the health of the staff.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Under the regulations of the Department, a refreshment interval of thirty minutes is provided for on the duties to which the hon. Member refers. As the hours of attendance are somewhat inconvenient as regards meal times a further short interval of ten minutes is allowed, as an act of grace, if the work admits of it, but I am not prepared to authorise any further extension.

Conveyance of Mails between Wick and Lybster.

Mr. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that about two years ago a light railway was opened between Wick and Lybster, in the county of Caithness; and whether, in view of the recent expiry of the contract for the carriage by road of the mails between these two places, he can see his way to arrange that in future the mails for Wick and Lybster, and all intervening places, shall be carried by the more expeditious means of the railway.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have now made full inquiry on the question of forwarding the mails between Wick and Lybster by train instead of by road, and I have been in communication with the railway company on the subject. It appears, however, that they cannot arrange for a train service at suitable hours except at considerable expense; and, as pointed out in a letter which I addressed to the hon. Member in April last, I should not be justified in making special payment for such a service. The use of the trains as at present running would on the whole greatly impair the postal service at all the places on the line, and I regret that, in the circumstances, it is not practicable to make any change in the present arrangements for the conveyance of the mails.

Smallpox Outbreaks.

Sir JOHN TUKE (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he would be willing to lay before the House a Return of the places in which cases of smallpox have occurred during the past twelve months, giving the total number of cases occurring in each place in which that number has reached or exceeded 100.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am willing to give a Return on this subject, and I will communicate with my hon. friend as to its form.

Captain JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will grant a Return showing the cost to the ratepayers of each outbreak of smallpox in urban districts and municipal boroughs during the past twelve months where the total number of cases has exceeded 100 in number.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have not the information desired; but I will endeavour to ascertain the amount of the expenditure incurred by the councils of municipal boroughs and urban districts in consequence of the occurrence of cases of smallpox in them during the past twelve months, where the number of cases has exceeded 100. I would suggest that the particulars, if it is found practicable to obtain them, should be included in the proposed Return referred to in my reply to the Question asked by my hon. friend the Member for the Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities.

Supply of Prayer and Hymn Books to Non-Provided Schools by Local Education Authorities.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether it is the practice of the Board of Education to require a local education authority, upon the request of the managers of any non-provided school, to supply prayer books and hymn books for the purpose of giving religious instruction.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) I do not think that I can do better than repeat the reply which I gave to a Question on the same subject from the hon. Member for the Morley Division of Yorkshire on March 15th† last, to the effect that no local authority has been called upon by the Board of Education to pay for books or other apparatus required for the purposes of the denominational instruction given in voluntary schools, and the Board has offered no encouragement to managers to press for such payments.

Sale of Obsolete Vessels.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty which of the vessels in List No. 3, of the Return of Vessels struck off the Effective List have been sold, and what price has been realised in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The vessels on List No. 3, which have been sold to date are the "Porpoise," "Sandfly," "Lizard," and "Havannah." The first three were sold abroad by tender; but it is contrary to the practice of the Department to disclose the prices tendered. The "Havannah" was sold by public auction, and realised £1,035. The "Boadicea," which is also included in List No. 3, is being broken up upon percentage terms. As the hon. Member is probably aware, a number of obsolete vessels are for sale by auction at Chatham to-morrow.

Sanitary Condition of the Naval Hospital at Malta.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether patients occupying the old wing of the Naval Hospital at Malta for surgical treatment have, while there or soon afterwards, developed fever.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) Patients while in hospital for surgical treatment, or soon after, have developed "fever," but the number is small. During 1904 there were seventy-four cases for operation, and of these three developed "fever."

SIR JOHN COLOMB: To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty when the inner surface of the walls of soft stone of the old wing of the Naval Hospital at Malta were last treated by any process of sanitary purification; and what was the nature of that process.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Lee.*) The whole of the walls of the wards and passages, etc., in the old portion of the hospital have been scraped and coated with a special gloss enamel paint, forming an impervious and washable surface. The soft stone floors have been removed, and replaced by terazzo paving. The work was commenced in 1899, and completed in 1902.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 29.

Holyhead Harbour—Expenditure from Public Funds.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state how much money from public funds was spent on the construction of Holyhead Harbour.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The cost of the outer or new harbour was £1,482,000. The Board of Trade have no information as to the cost of the inner or old harbour.

Lough Neagh Drainage Trustees.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the circumstances under which the Board of Lough Neagh Drainage Trustees was called into being; and what conditions are imposed upon them with regard to the auditing and publication of their accounts, and generally with regard to the manner in which the duties assigned to them must be discharged.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The trustees are elected under the Act 5 and 6 Vic., c. 89, s. 120, in order to maintain the Lough Neagh drainage system. No conditions are imposed upon them with regard to the auditing and publication of accounts; but under the Act they are required to maintain the works in an efficient state of repair, and to raise the necessary funds for the purpose by means of a rate levied only on the proprietors. If any of these duties be neglected, injured persons can appeal to the Board of Works, who would immediately take cognisance of the matter. Electors can also make their wishes felt on the occasion of the periodical elections of the trustees.

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899—Appointment of the Chairmen of the Commissions.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Chairman of Ways and Means under what system the Chairmen of the Commissions appointed under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, are selected; whether there is any rule requiring the appointment of a Member of the Upper House as Chairman; and whether there is any instance of Members of both Houses sitting upon a Commission when a Member of the House of Commons has been Chairman of the Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. J. W. Lowther.*) The system under which the Chairmen of the Commissions appointed under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, are chosen is that of alternative selection from the two Houses of Parliament, so far as circumstances permit. There is no rule requiring the appointment of a Member of the Upper House as Chairman, nor is there any rule requiring the appointment of a Member of the Lower House. In 1903 a Member of the House of Commons was the Chairman of a Commission composed of two Peers and two Members of the House of Commons. Out of the thirteen Commissions which have been appointed since the Act came into force six Chairmen have been appointed from the House of Lords, six from the House of Commons, and one from the extra-Parliamentary Panel.

Weights and Measures—Universal Recognition of Stamping.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether a scale duly stamped in one English county must be recognised as being properly stamped by the Inspector of Weights and Measures in another English county.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) A weighing instrument, stamped by an Inspector of Weights and Measures, need not be restamped because it is used in a district other than that in which it was originally stamped.

Hours of Men Employed in Manipulation of Traffic.

MR. BELL (Derby): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will call for a Return of hours worked over twelve per day by men employed in the manipulation of traffic, similar to the Return obtained for October, 1903; and if he will take steps to get it issued in less time than the last one.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Yes, Sir, a Return for last March will be called for and issued as soon as possible.

Convictions for Drunkenness.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of persons who were convicted as guilty of drunk and disorderly conduct in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales respectively, in each of the years ending December 31st, 1901, 1902, 1903, and 1904; how many were convicted in each of the first two years on summons for being drunk and incapable, and during last two years after summons or arrest for the same offence in the respective countries for the same years; how many during the last two years were convicted for being drunk, and not necessarily incapable, whilst having charge of a child; how many persons convicted of drunkenness were ordered to give security for good behaviour; and how many persons obtained protection against husband or wife who was an habitual drunkard.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am sorry that I cannot give separately the figures mentioned in the first three heads of the Question. The statutes creating offences of the nature of drunkenness are numerous, and it is necessary in the Judicial Statistics and in the Returns on which these statistics are based to group them together under one head. The total number of convictions coming under the head of drunkenness for the three years 1901, 1902, and 1903 are as follows:—

	1901.	1902.	1903.
Arrested and convicted - -	127,011	128,697	155,349
Summoned and convicted - -	62,339	60,900	54,036
Total convicted - -	189,350	189,597	209,385

The figures for 1904 are not yet available. The number of persons convicted of drunkenness who were ordered to enter into recognisances in 1901, 1902, and 1903 were 821, 949, and 1,950 respectively. In 1903 there were 437 separation orders granted to husbands of habitual drunkards and 281 to wives. The figures given above relate to England and Wales. For figures relating to Scotland and Ireland (where the statutes differ from those in force in England and also to some extent the practice of the Courts), the hon. Member should apply to the Scottish Office and to the Irish Government.

Rewards for Information of Illegal Trawling.

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that on March 17th the foreign master of the trawler "Apollo" was convicted of illegal trawling in the Sheriff Court at Wick, when a fine of £75 was imposed, the detection which resulted in this conviction having been made by certain pilots belonging to the port of Wick; and whether he is prepared to recommend in such cases that private persons, through whose instrumentality convictions are obtained, should be suitably rewarded.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) On 13th ultimo the "Apollo" was observed by the Harbour Master and others trawling so close to the land as to leave no doubt that it was within the three-mile limit. Some pilots, who were leaving the harbour, were asked to ascertain the name and number of the "Apollo," and did so, thus aiding in the detection of the offending vessel. The master pled guilty, no witnesses being examined; and there is no fund from which any payments, as suggested, could be made.

Illegal Trawling by British Trawl Boats sailing under Foreign Flags.

MR. HARMSWORTH: To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he is aware that, on March 13th, a so-called foreign trawler, named the "Apollo," was detected by pilots belonging to the port of Wick trawling within two miles of Wick; that the flag captain of the "Apollo" was tried in Wick Sheriff Court on March 17th, when he pleaded guilty and was fined £75, which he paid; that the flag captain was a foreigner, while all the crew and the sailing master were English, and that the "Apollo," although given out as belonging to Norway, was built in England and is believed to be a Grimsby trawler; and whether, in view of these facts, he will now consider what steps should be taken to put an end to illegal trawling by British trawl-boats sailing under foreign flags.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I cannot regard it as accurate to describe these vessels as British trawl-boats sailing under foreign flags, but the circumstances giving rise to the Question are under consideration by the Law Officers of the Crown.

Sugar Duties.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his recent statement of the average duties received from sugar includes the duty on molasses; and if not, whether he will state for the same periods the average duty received per hundredweight of sugar and molasses taken together.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The recent statement referred to sugar only. The average gross rate of duty received on sugar and molasses in each financial year since the reimposition of the Sugar Duty up to March 31st, 1904, and in the eleven months up to February 28th, 1905, is as follows:—Financial year ended March 31st, 1902, the cwt., 3s. 10·10d.; Financial year ended March 31st, 1903, the cwt., 3s. 9·04d.; Financial year ended March 31st, 1904, the cwt., 3s. 10·80d.; Eleven months ended February 28th, 1905, the cwt., 3s. 11·18d.

Vaccination Fees in Ireland and Scotland.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say what has been the cost to Ireland and Scotland, respectively, for vaccination fees since the year 1845.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The total amounts of fees paid in Ireland to March 31st, 1904, was £381,643. I have no information as to the amount of fees paid in Scotland.

Payment for Teaching of Music and Singing at Killultagh National School.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the workmistress of Killultagh National School, Roll No. 8,057, Circuit 8, Section B, was requested in 1900 by Inspector O'Connor to teach music and singing to the pupils, and that she has performed this work for five years without having received remuneration; and whether he will explain why applications received by the Board on this teacher's behalf, pointing out the extra work and asking for consideration, have not been acceded to.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The inspector states that he did not request the workmistress to teach music and singing, but that he may have suggested the desirability of her doing so during the hours which she was required to devote to the general work of the school, provided that she were willing and the manager approved. The Commissioners informed the manager, so far back as 1901, that he was at liberty to so employ the workmistress during her ordinary hours, but that no extra remuneration could be allowed for this service.

Salary of Teacher of School Roll No. 5094.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the equivalent grant, in lieu of results fees, paid to the teacher of Roll No. 5094 national school for the year ended May 31st, 1900, was not based on the amount earned the previous year by Mr. M'Carthy, instead of having it based on amounts earned by his predecessor; why his consolidated salary was reduced from £87 to £74 per annum; and whether this case will be again considered by the resident Commissioner.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The grant in this and similar cases is based on the average results fees earned in the school in the preceding three years. Mr. M'Carthy's consolidated income, which amounted to £85, and not £87 as stated, was divided into salary £74, and residual capitation grant £11. His income, therefore, was not reduced. The case has already been fully considered.

Extent of Coast Line of Irish Congested Districts.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the extent of the coast line of the congested districts in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The extent of the coast line, including islands, is estimated to be approximately 1,000 miles.

Salaries of Irish National School Teachers.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that students who were in the Irish training colleges at the time of the abolition of the results system, and who are now engaged as principal teachers, are losing from £10 to £80 per annum, according to the size of their schools; and whether, in view of the effect of this on the training colleges, inasmuch as students are reluctant to enter the service of the Board under the present scale of salaries, he will invite the Commissioners to reconsider the whole question of the salaries of Irish national teachers.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) In the case of teachers already in the service who were in training in 1900, when the new system of payments came into operation, any promotion in classification which they received as the result of their training and which would have involved an increase in salary under the old regulations was considered when fixing their initial incomes under the new regulations. The new incomes are capable of increases, within the limits of the scales, by increments of good service salary and by promotion in grade, and though there may be cases in which principal teachers are actually receiving less incomes than they might have received under the old regulations, yet, when it is considered that their incomes under the old regulations were liable to grave fluctuations owing to the system of payment by results and that their new incomes are not so liable to fluctuation and are of a progressive character, the position of the teachers as a body is better under the new regulations than under the old. The Commissioners have no evidence that the falling off in the number of men candidates for training colleges last year was directly attributable to the new system of salaries, and this year there has been an all round increase in the number of men candidates seeking admission to these institutions.

The Island of Innisglora.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Congested Districts Board or the Estates Commissioners have taken any steps to purchase the Island of Innisglora, Belmullet Union, county Mayo, which property is under the control of the Court of Chancery; and, if not, seeing that the present grazing tenants are willing to surrender, they will take such steps with a view to the enlargement of holdings and the reinstatement of evicted tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The reply to this Question is in the negative. This island, of which the Poor Law valuation is but £8 5s., is stated to consist chiefly of sandy wastes, and it has no permanent residents.

Constable on Licensed Premises after Hours at Gortmelia.

MR. O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the attention of the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary has been called to the presence, after hours, of a constable of the force in the Belmullet district in the licensed premises of a publican at Gortmelia, Belmullet Union, on February 1st, 1904; and whether he can say if the Inspector-General intends to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Inspector-General has recently received a complaint to the effect mentioned, and is inquiring into the matter.

Prosecution of Vendors of Irish Salt Firkin Butter containing over 16 per cent. of Water.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of prosecutions there have been in Ireland within the past two years against vendors of Irish salt firkin butter on account of it containing over 16 per cent. of water; how many of these cases have been dismissed, and on what grounds; what has been the percentage of water in the butter in these cases; and if he will also state the percentage of water in butter in the cases in which convictions have been obtained, and the number of convictions.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This information will take some time to collect and tabulate, but, if I can procure it, I will communicate it to the hon. Member. It appears to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction that the results of the analyses of samples of salt firkin butter taken by the inspectors are of far greater importance than returns of convictions and dismissals, some of the latter no doubt on technical grounds. 1,118 samples of firkin butter were taken for analysis by the local food inspectors in the following counties: Clare, Galway, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary (N.R.), and Tipperary (S.R.), between May 15th, 1902, (the date on which the Sale of Butter (Ireland) Regulations, 1902, came into operation) and December 31st, 1904. Of these samples, 1,022 were found to contain not more than 16 per cent. of water, and 60 to contain over 16 and not more than 20 per cent. of water. In the remaining samples, 36, the proportion of water exceeded 20 per cent. These facts show how small is the number of cases in which the water in the butter exceeds the 16 per cent. limit prescribed by the regulations under Sections 4 and 24 of The Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1899, which are in force both in Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. M. Halpin, of Carricksherry National School.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inspector and manager of Mr. M. Halpin, of Carricksherry National School, Ardagh, county Limerick, recommended him for promotion; whether his case was considered after those letters of recommendation reached the office; and whether, in view of this man's length of efficient service, steps will be taken to have him promoted.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Mr. Halpin was not recommended for promotion by the senior inspector in 1903. The manager wrote urging Mr. Halpin's claims, and the case was referred to the senior inspector for a special report, but he still found himself unable to recommend the teacher's promotion. When the promotion of teachers for 1904 came under consideration, Mr. Halpin was recommended by the senior inspector, but the reports on his school were not of a sufficiently favourable character to warrant his promotion. The report of the annual inspection held on December 13th, 1904, has now been received, and the case of Mr. Halpin will again be considered by the Commissioners.

Grades of Irish National School Teachers.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the various grades into which national teachers in Ireland are now divided, the number in each grade, and the salary and pension of each grade.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The grades into which national school teachers are divided, the numbers in each grade on 31st December, 1904, and the standard annual salaries (exclusive of residual capitation grant, payment for extra branches, and for evening schools) are as follows :—

Grade.	No.	Salaries.
Principal Teachers—		
First Grade, First Division - -	490	Men £139 to £175. Women £114 to £141.
First Grade, Second Division - -	733	Men £117 to £127. Women £97 to £105.
Second Grade - - - - -	2,474	Men £87 to £107. Women £73 to £89.
Third Grade - - - - -	4,575	Men £56 to £77. Women £44 to £65.
Assistant Teachers - - - -	4,009	*

*Assistant Teachers receive third grade salary, with an added bonus of £9 for men and £7 10s. for women, after five years service, if the assistant be trained or classed higher than third class.

The rules touching the relations between the grading of teachers and their pension rights are at present under revision.

Saving on Office of Irish Board of Agriculture.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state, under suitable heads, the amount of saving on the office for the Irish Agricultural Department for the year 1904–5.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This information is not yet available. It will appear in due course in the appropriation account of the Department for the year mentioned.

Berridge Estate, Connemara.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Berridge Estate, Connemara, has been offered to the Congested Districts Board for purchase; and, if so, if he will state the terms demanded by the landlord, and say whether the Congested Districts Board has declined to purchase this estate; and, if so, will he state upon what grounds.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) A proposal to sell this estate to the Board was made last year and was declined. I cannot disclose the price asked by the owner. The Board considered that they could not by the purchase and resale of the estate confer any substantial advantages on the tenants, seeing that there was no agricultural land available for the enlargement of small holdings, and that the holdings generally were well arranged. There appeared to be nothing to prevent the owner from selling direct to the tenants.

Winding up of Ballygawley (County Tyrone) Loan Fund.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland upon what date it was ordered that the Ballygawley (county Tyrone) Loan Fund should be wound up; what was the amount due by borrowers when the winding up order was made; the amount due at the present time; and if any balance-sheet has been issued to the debenture holders.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am informed that, technically speaking, no order for the winding up of this loan fund has been made. But, in a consolidated suit at the instance of two debenture holders, the Chancery Division made an order, dated 22nd November, 1899, appointing a receiver over the fund. On 19th September, 1899, the amount due by the fund to debenture holders was £1,437 8s. 4d., and the amount due to the fund by borrowers was £1,282 2s. The receiver has since received £468 19s. 10d., out of which he has been allowed costs of the suits, commission, and other expenses. The net balance, amounting to £137 14s. 6d., has, by order of the Court dated 16th January, 1905, been paid over to the Loan Fund Board, who have retained it pending legal advice as to its disposal. The books of the fund are in the hands of the receiver, and the Board have no information as to the amount still due by borrowers save in so far as may be inferred from the figures already mentioned. The Board are not aware whether a balance-sheet has been or will be issued by the receiver to the debenture holders.

Permission to Manufacture New Service Rifle.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether permission to private firms to manufacture on payment of royalty the new service rifle has been refused; and whether he is aware that such refusal has resulted in the transfer of important orders from England to Germany.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Permission has not been granted to private manufacturers to use for sale the Government patents embodied in the new service rifle. The reply to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Admiralty Surgeon at Belmullet.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the professional qualifications of the surgeon to the Admiralty at Belmullet; what previous experience in the practice of his profession he had, and where, before his appointment; the reasons which caused the Admiralty to consider the appointment of Dr. Studdert more suitable than that of Dr. MacHale; the total sum in fees received by Dr. Studdert during his first twelve months as surgeon; and the total sum in fees received by Dr. Lavan in his last twelve months in that position.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The professional qualifications of the Admiralty surgeon and agent at Belmullet are:—Lic. Lic. Midwif. R. Coll. Phys., Ireland, Lic. Lic. Midwif. R. Coll. Surg., Ireland. He had had previous experience at High Wycombe and Sheffield, and was recommended by the local divisional officer, after careful inquiry, as being the most desirable candidate. The total sum in fees received by Dr. Studdert during his first twelve months as surgeon and agent was £178; and th total sum in fees received by Dr. Lavan in his last twelve months in that position was £140 2s. 6d.

Army Clothing Factory—Report of Principal Lady Inspector.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can inform the House how it was that at the time of the debate on the Army Clothing Vote he had not seen the Report on the Army Clothing Factory by the principal Lady Inspector of Factories under the Home Office, which had been seen by private Members on the Government side of the House; and whether he had applied for it in view of the debate.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield): I did not see the Report because it was not sent to me, nor, as far as I am aware, to anyone else. I understand that the Report is not yet complete, and the Home Office is waiting for a further Report from their lady inspector before communicating with the War Department, in accordance with their usual practice. I am informed that the Reports of factory inspectors are confidential, and it is not the practice of the Home Office to send the actual Reports to the War Office or to any Department or individual outside the Home Office. I am not aware that the

Report referred to had been, or has been, seen either by private Members on the Government side or by the right hon. Baronet, as is suggested, and I have no knowledge as to how the right hon. Baronet or the private Members to whom he refers, but does not name, obtained possession of, or access to, it—if they actually did so. As I was not aware of the existence of the Report I did not apply for it in view of the debate on the Army Clothing Vote.

The Jam Contracts for South Africa.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the statement on page 258 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General to the effect that 337,704 lbs. of jam were written off on account of shortage in the Durban supply account for July, 1903, and to the statement on the same page that on April 26th, 1904, the Auditor-General wrote to the War Office for information respecting the contracts under which the jam was supplied; and whether he will say why nearly a year was allowed to elapse before the War Office gave any explanation of this incident, which arose twenty months ago from the writing off on account of supposed shortage in supply.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Will the hon. Member kindly refer to the reply to a similar Question put by the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton on March 22nd.†

DR. MACNAMARA: I remember that Answer perfectly. It is not a reply to this Question. Why was nearly a year allowed to elapse before the War Office gave an explanation of the incident which arose twenty months ago?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I expressed regret for the delay and explained it was caused by the necessity of getting answers from South Africa and from the Agents-General of the Colonies concerned. I am very sorry for that delay.

Army Chaplains in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why clergymen of the Church of England are appointed Army chaplains at the garrison churches in Dublin and other parts of Ireland in preference to clergymen of the Church of Ireland; and will he take care in making future appointments that they shall be given to qualified clergymen of the Church of Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Is not the hon. Member aware that the Church of Ireland has been disestablished and no longer exists?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member ought not to make these little interruptions.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, S.): There are only three stations in Ireland where the local clergy do not officiate, viz.: Dublin, Curragh, and Cork, in each of which large numbers of troops, not necessarily Irish, are quartered. The proportion of clergy of the Church of Ireland among the commissioned chaplains is large, and some of these chaplains are now serving in Ireland. I regret that I am unable to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member to confine the postings of Army chaplains in Ireland to clergymen of the Church of Ireland.

Army Wastage.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the numbers, exclusive of officers, of the Regular Army, borne on the Home and Colonial establishment, who, during the twelve months ending September 30th, 1904, or any more convenient day that year, were struck off the rolls in consequence of desertion, discharge for probable ineffectiveness, or for misconduct, invaliding, or death; and whether he can approximately calculate the money loss this wastage cost the United Kingdom.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The wastage during the year ending 30th September, 1904, was as follows:—Deserters

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii,. 785.

(less deserters rejoined), 1,244; discharged as not likely to become efficient, 1,373; discharged for misconduct, 3,530; invalided, 3,900; died, 901. Total, 10,948. To calculate the exact loss involved would entail great labour, and I am not prepared to give approximate figures which would be misleading.

Belfast District Army Forage Contracts.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War on what grounds were the contracts for the supply of forage for all military stations in the Belfast district, including Belfast, Athlone, Dundalk, and Belturbet, given to one Belfast company, Cullen, Allen & Co., at prices amounting in some cases to 33 per cent. higher than various traders who had each of them at different times discharged forage contracts with satisfaction and had tendered for these contracts; whether the fact of these tenders at lower quotations than the quotations of Cullen, Allen & Co., was reported to and known to the War Office authorities when those authorities gave their sanction and approval to these contracts; whether, although the business arising from the Belfast contracts is conducted by the staff of Messrs. Cullen & Allen, the work of the other contracts has been intrusted by that firm to agents, some of whom had tendered for these contracts to the military authorities at Belfast; and what explanation, if any, has the War Office to offer of this transaction.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In two cases this firm made the lowest tender, and in the two other cases the lowest tenderers were unsatisfactory, and Cullen, Allen & Co., who were the lowest satisfactory tenderers, were accepted. The reply to the second part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the last part of the Question, there is only one station at which one of the agents of this firm had himself been a tenderer, and for this station Messrs. Cullen, Allen & Co.'s tender was the lowest.

Transfers from the Volunteers to the Regular Army.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many men have joined the Regular Army from the Volunteer force in each of the last four years.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The figures are as follows:—

	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
Service Companies -	5,124	2,508	—	—
Waiting Companies	227	—	—	—
Imperial Yeomanry	3,900	1,164	—	—
Others - -	4,454	3,249	2,577	3,064
Total -	13,705	6,921	2,577	3,064

Reservists and Re-enlistment.

Colonel WYNDHAM MURRAY (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to cases of soldiers of the Army Reserve making false statements that they have not served before, with a view of being attested as recruits for the Regular Army; and whether, in view of the number of unemployed men in the Army Reserve, he will say what military or other objection exists to the re-enlistment of such men in the Regular Army, if they have passed to the Reserve with good characters, and desire to return to the Regular ranks.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not aware that the number of cases of Reservists endeavouring to rejoin the colours by making false statements is large. Last year only fifty-four cases occurred of men being relegated to the Reserve for false answer on attestation. The general principle of maintaining a Reserve does not admit of a general permission to men of good character to return, and applications are generally refused.

Rock of Gibraltar—Inspection by Distinguished Foreigners.

Mr. MAJENDIE (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why every facility is given to distinguished foreigners to view the Rock of Gibraltar and its fortifications, while British naval officers are only allowed the same facilities as those extended to ordinary strangers.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The responsibility for ensuring the secrecy of works of defence is vested in the General Officer Commanding on the spot. I do not propose in any way to question the discretion of the General Officer Commanding the fortress of Gibraltar.

Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he proposes to reduce the Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers; if so, what units he proposes to reduce or to abolish; and on what grounds some will be reduced or abolished and others retained.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The reduction in the Volunteers which has been decided upon will extend to the Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers, but I am not prepared at present to state exactly how it will take effect.

War Office Land Purchase in County Donegal.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to a Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the account prepared under the provisions of the Military Works Acts, 1897, 1899, 1901, and 1903, in which it is stated that the charge under Head I., Defence Works, on page 3 of the account, includes a sum of £2,040, paid into the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland, in respect of the piece of land compulsorily acquired by the War Department which was valued on behalf of the War Office at £30, an amount which the Irish Valuation Commissioners considered to be fair and reasonable; where is this land situate; who is the owner; what was the necessity for proceedings under the Defence Act of 1860 to compel him to sell this land; and whether the War Office authorities have any explanation to make with reference to the comment of the Comptroller and Auditor-General that similar cases, in each of which the account has been largely in excess of the valuation, had come under the notice of his Department in the examination of the Account, 1904–5.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: My attention has been drawn to this case. The land is at Ned Point, Buncrana, county Donegal. The person who claims the land, a Mr. Richardson, asked for £8,000, and as this was deemed very excessive and the site was essential for defence works, it became necessary to resort to compulsory purchase, under which a sum of £2,040 was ultimately awarded. Mr. Richardson has, however, been hitherto unable to prove his title. It is the case that the sums paid under compulsory purchase in Ireland are largely in excess of the valuation, and in this respect the Military Lands Acts have proved very unsatisfactory.

Employment of Women in Bombay Drinking Bars.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that representations have been made to the Government of Bombay deploring the growth of the drinking habits of the people, and urging the passing of legislation prohibiting the employment of women in drinking bars; and whether, in view of these representations, the Government of Bombay are now prepared to introduce legislation in order to make the law in this respect uniform with that in force in Bengal and Burma.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I am aware that a resolution on the subject was passed by a Temperance Congress held in Bombay at the end of last year, and was submitted to the Government of Bombay. I have ascertained that that Government see no reason to alter their view; that the necessary control can be exercised by refusing licences, and that specific prohibition by law is unnecessary.

Sale of Intoxicants to Children in Bombay.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of Bombay has received memorials in favour of the prohibition by law of the sale of intoxicating liquors to children under fourteen years of age; and whether he can state the views of the Bombay Government upon this subject.

Mr. BRODRICK: I have ascertained that the Government of Bombay have decided to introduce a clause in future licences prohibiting the sale of liquor to persons under fourteen years of age.

Tibet—Colonel Younghusband's Instructions.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Viceroy at once communicated to Colonel Younghusband the telegrams of 27th June and 4th July last, from the Secretary of State, forbidding Colonel Younghusband to make to the Tibetans any suggestion as to the appointment of a Resident at Lhasa, or to name any conditions without the sanction of the Secretary of State; and whether these telegrams were received by Colonel Younghusband before the decision was arrived at to proceed from Gyangtse to Lhasa.

MR. BRODRICK: The telegrams to which the hon. Member refers were communicated to Colonel Younghusband by the Viceroy by telegraph on the 29th June and 5th July respectively. I have therefore no doubt that they had been received by Colonel Younghusband before the 8th July, on which date it was decided, as will be seen from a reference to the Blue-book (page 28, Number 85) that the advance from Gyangtse to Lhasa should be no longer delayed.

The Late Lord Salisbury and Colonial Trade Preference.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will lay upon the Table the reply of the late Marquess of Salisbury, when Prime Minister and Secretary of State, to the deputation on June 19th, 1891, of the United Empire Trade League, with regard to the treaties preventing the adoption of preferential trade within the Empire, and the despatches of 1897 to His Majesty's representatives at Berlin and Brussels, directing them to denounce these treaties as injurious to British trade.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The despatches alluded to were laid in 1897 ("Commercial No. 7"). Lord Salisbury's reply was reported at length in *The Times* of June 20th, 1891, and I know of no precedent for laying an unofficial report of a speech as a Parliamentary Paper.

Wages in the Post Office—Tracing Staff's Memorial.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the memorial of the tracing staff, Accountant-General's Department, forwarded last November, is under consideration; and, having regard to the fact that this class has only received one increase of 2s. per week in their maximum pay since its institution in 1875, whether he can give his favourable consideration to their case, in view of the findings of the Bradford Committee respecting the pay of the larger classes of postal employees and the late Postmaster-General's promise to deal with the smaller classes, in the light of the standard set up by this Committee.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The hon. Member will observe from the Memorandum which was furnished to the House a few days ago that the officers to whom he refers have now received an improvement of pay.

Conscientious Objections to Vaccination.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, in view of the fact that magistrates throughout the country place different constructions on the term "conscientious objection," as defined in the Vaccination Act, 1898, cases having recently occurred in which a man, who had been granted a certificate of exemption for one child, has been refused a certificate for another, although he has in each instance raised precisely the same conscientious objection to vaccination, will he consider the expediency of so amending the Act as to remove the difficulty experienced by magistrates.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I believe that there has been some divergency of practice amongst magistrates in this matter, but, as I think the hon. Member is aware, the Lord Chief Justice made some observations at the Birmingham Assizes in July last with a view to a more uniform administration of the law on the subject. In order to bring these observations under the notice of the magistrates throughout the country my right hon. friend the Home Secretary embodied them in a circular which he has issued to clerks to justices, and I trust that the result of this action will be to secure greater uniformity in the practice of magistrates under the enactment in question. It does not appear to me to be necessary to amend the law on the subject.

Mr. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the circular sent out by the Home Secretary has been absolutely useless, as in the case referred to in my Question?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not aware of that.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the magistrates continue to entirely disregard the observations of the Lord Chief Justice? Can nothing be done?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Only by altering the law, and I think that unnecessary.

Underfed School Children.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the event of his Department deciding to send a circular to the London boards of guardians calling their attention to the necessity of granting to teachers of elementary schools sufficient food or money to enable them to deal with children who were in need of food, he will arrange to take such steps as may be necessary to make the cost of such relief a legal charge upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The object which the hon. Member has in view could only be effected by legislation, and I could not give any promise to introduce a Bill on the subject.

Mr. CROOKS: Then will no circular be issued?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir.

Duties of Relieving Officers towards Underfed Children.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is not the duty of a relieving officer, in case a teacher informs him that a child under such teacher's care is destitute of necessary food, to inquire into the case, and if the relieving officer finds the statement to be correct to give the necessary relief; whether the Local Government Board did not, in 1896, issue to relieving officers extracts from the general Orders issued by the Board and its predecessors relating to the duties of such officers; whether such extracts contained any information, and, if so, what, as to their duties with regard to children destitute of necessary food on whose behalf teachers made application for relief; and if they did not contain such information would he either cause the circular containing such to be issued or indicate in what book, accessible to relieving officers, it can be found.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Orders provide that it shall be the duty of a relieving officer to receive all applications for relief made to him within his district or relating to any parish within his district, and forthwith to examine into the circumstances of every case by visiting the home and making all necessary inquiries, and to report the result of such inquiries to the guardians at their next ordinary meeting. The Orders also provide that it shall be his duty in every case of sudden or urgent necessity to afford such relief to the destitute person as may be requisite, provided that the same be not given in money. It would be incumbent on a relieving officer to act in accordance with these requirements if application were made to him by a teacher for relief to a child under the teacher's care who was destitute of necessary food. The extracts from the Orders issued to relieving officers in 1896 contained the provisions to which I have alluded; but the Orders do not refer specifically to cases of the kind mentioned in the Question. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Education and I have been in communication with regard to such cases, and I am now considering whether any further steps should be taken in connection with them and a circular be issued on the subject.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil: Will the Department also consider the advisability of recommending boards of guardians to make grants to education authorities to meet these cases ?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That hardly arises out of the Question on the Paper.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will steps be taken to secure that parents able to pay are either compelled to do so or made paupers ?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: That is one of the matters under consideration.

Education Department and Underfed School Children.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he has consulted the President of the Local Government Board with respect to the extent to which boards of guardians may assist local education authorities in the work of providing food for children in attendance at public elementary schools suffering from want of proper food; what the result of his consultation, if any, has been; and whether he is now in a position to issue, on behalf of the Board of Education, any circular of suggestions as to the course to be adopted by elementary school teachers who may find children hungry and ill-fed under their charge.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University): I am still in communication with the Local Government Board, and have every hope that it will shortly be possible to issue a circular of suggestions on the subject in question.

Brompton (Yorks) School Headmastership.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the letter dated March 8th, 1905, of the Rev. F. O. Chambers, Brompton Vicarage, R.S.O., Yorks, to an applicant for the headmastership of the non-provided school in the parish, in which the reverend gentleman says the managers will give the preference to any candidate both able and willing to help on Sunday with a small organ in church and to teach the choir hymns, and to the further communication of the reverend gentleman that they, the managers, have no use for a bigot or a Protestant; whether these communications constitute a breach of the Board of Education's Code of Regulations; and, if so, whether he will communicate with the North Riding County Council on the matter.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I understand that the local education authority have not yet consented to the appointment to the headmastership of the candidate proposed by the managers, and that they have the facts of the case fully before them. Under the circumstances no action by the Board appears to be needed.

Dr. MACNAMARA: Do not these communications constitute a breach of the Education Code Regulations ?

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: If they are made absolute conditions to the appointment they do, but if they are merely held out as inducements to candidates they do not.

Crown Lands.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the total area of Crown land at present enclosed as woodland; how much of it is let for shooting; and from how much of it the public is altogether excluded.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): The total area of Crown land in England and Wales under the management of the Commissioners of Woods at present enclosed as woodland is about 46,098 acres, of which about 18,267 acres are let for shooting, whilst the public is altogether excluded from about 5,031 acres.

Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether his attention has been directed to the resolution of a recent meeting of Moray Firth fishermen at Buckie with regard to the continued evasion of the by laws passed by the Fishery Board for Scotland closing the Moray Firth against trawlers, and praying His Majesty's Government to give effect without delay to the recommendation of the Fishery Board that all ports in the United Kingdom should be closed against the landing of fish caught by trawlers in the Moray Firth; and, if so, will he state on what ground the Government fail to give effect to the recommendations of the Fishery Board for Scotland.

*The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The Secretary for Scotland is in communication with other Departments of the Government concerned in this matter.

Lisbellaw Petty Sessions—District Inspector Murnane.

Mr. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he is aware that District Inspector Murnane, of Lisnaskea, when recently conducting cases for the Crown at the petty sessions in Lisbellaw, county Fermanagh, said to the Court before they decided the case under consideration that unless they gave judgment as he sought he would have a case stated for the King's Bench, Dublin; and, if so, whether this interference with the magistrates in the discharge of their duty received his sanction.

The ATTORNEY - GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): District Inspector Murnane reports that he did not recently, or on any occasion, use the language attributed to him, or any language of the like purport or effect. The district inspector, however, states that in a recent prosecution against a publican named McCreery for selling liquor to a drunken person, after the justices, of whom the hon. Member was one, had erroneously dismissed the case on the grounds that the publican was not at the time of sale aware of the drunkenness of the customer, and not before that decision was given, he, the district inspector, served notices upon the justices requiring them to state a case to have this most important legal point determined. Eight of the eleven justices who heard the case did their duty and stated a case. I believe the hon. Member refused to do so. I entirely approve of the action of the district inspector as reported by him to me.

Irish Land Sale Agreements.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, in the case of the creation of tenancies in farms for the purposes of sale to the son or other relative of the landlord, the agreement in the transaction sets forth the date of such tenancy; and, if not, will a direction be given that for the purpose of preventing such sales the date of the creation of the tenancy must be given.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Estates Commissioners report that where the tenancy is described as a tenancy from year to year, it is their practice to ask for further particulars as to the date of its creation and for the production of the instrument, if any, creating it. These inquiries are made with particular care where the tenancy commenced subsequent to January 1st, 1901.

Belfast Constabulary Doctor.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many times members of the Royal Irish Constabulary in C District, Belfast, were obliged to call in doctors other than those appointed for the purpose; had they to bear the expense of the treatment received; and, if so, will he direct inquiry to be made into the matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): During the past three years, twenty-seven members of the force in this district called in, at their own expense, doctors other than the police medical attendant. The Inspector-General's attention has already been directed to this matter, and he is inquiring into it.

Waveney School, Ballymena.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Guy's National School, Ballymena, was condemned by the National Board as overcrowded and unsanitary; that the residents opened the Waveney School to provide the necessary accommodation; that, notwithstanding the fact that about 100 pupils have been maintained for more than one year, the Board have refused repeated applications for a grant; and whether, in view of the fact that the Board has given a grant to Cloncore School, near Portadown, although there is a school under Protestant management in the same place capable of accommodating all the children in the locality, he will explain why the grant is made in the one case and refused in the other.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Guy's National School has not been condemned, but the Governors are about to build a new school to supersede it. The Board have refused to recognise the Waveney School upon the grounds that the children in attendance have been withdrawn from other schools in which sufficient accommodation already existed, and that the premises are both unsuitable and insanitary. The case of Cloncore School is not analogous. The Commissioners decide each case on its merits.

Strandtown National School, Belfast.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the average attendance at Strandtown National School, Belfast, during the year 1904; what number of pupils is accommodation provided for, allowing ten square feet for each pupil; when did the National Board's inspector first report on overcrowding in regard to this school; and how often has the Board directed the attention of the manager to the necessity of providing additional accommodation; and whether, in view of the terms on which a manager can borrow money from the Board of Public Works, he will refuse to continue a grant to this school if the manager refuses to provide suitable accommodation for the children attending.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The average attendance was 305, and the number for which accommodation exists is 224. The inspector first reported overcrowding in September, 1904, and the Commissioners directed the attention of the manager to the matter in October, 1904. The manager has since taken steps to reduce the number of pupils in attendance. The Commissioners will consider the question of continuing the grants when they have received the returns for the past quarter.

Evicted Tenants in County Kerry.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many evicted tenants in county Kerry have sent in claims for reinstatement to their farms, and how many have been reinstated since the passage of the Land Act of 1903.

Mr. WALTER LONG: 410 applications have been received, and nineteen evicted tenants have been, or are in process of being, reinstated.

Mahon, Ballydonlon, Estate.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if Mr. Rothwell, petty sessions clerk of Ballinasloe, is to get any portion of the Mahon, Ballydonlon, Estate, purchased by the Estates Commissioners, in view of the fact that he does not live near the estate, and that he has more than one farm elsewhere.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have already informed the hon. Member that this estate has been purchased by, and vested in, the tenants, of whom Mr. Rothwell is not one.

Mr. ROCHE: This is the fourth time this Question has appeared on the Paper. Cannot the right hon. Gentleman say if Mr. Rothwell is to have any of this land?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I can only give the answer I have received from the Commissioners.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is he going to get any of the untenanted land on this estate?

Mr. WALTER LONG: How can I possibly say what is to become of the land after it has been vested in the tenants?

Mr. KILBRIDE: The Question specifically asks if Mr. Rothwell is going to get any of the land.

Mr. SPEAKER: And it has been answered. The right hon. Gentleman says he is not in a position to say whether he will get any of the land.

Mr. ROCHE: Then he ought to be in a position to say.

Alleged United Irish League Outrage at Templemore.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received reports of an attack upon the residence of Mr. George Thompson, of Barnane House, Templemore, county Tipperary, on the night of February 21st last; and, if so, what steps have been taken to bring the offenders to justice; and whether, in view of the treatment accorded for three years past to Mr. George Thompson and his brother, with their families, at the instance of the United Irish League, because they refuse to yield possession of lands which have been held by the family for fifty-five years, he will take measures to afford protection to these people, so as to prevent any recurrence of the recent attack.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Has the hon. Gentleman never heard of stones being thrown in Armagh?

Mr. WALTER LONG: Two stones were thrown at the house of Mr. Thompson on the night mentioned, one of which entered the window of an unoccupied room. The case has been closely investigated by the police, but so far they have been unable to trace the offender. All necessary measures, I am assured, have been taken by the responsible authorities to afford protection to the persons and properties of Mr. Thompson, his brother, and other members of their families.

Irish Local Administration—Accounts Orders.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the proportion of cases of neglect of duty or of malappropriation of property on the part of local officers has been greater in Ireland than in England and Scotland; and whether, in the case of members of local authorities charged with looking after the administration of the Poor Laws, there has been a greater remissness of duty on the part of Irish representatives than those of England or Scotland; and, if not, whether he will explain why Irish officers in the new Orders of the Local Government Board are treated as if they were not to be trusted; and why provisions are put in the new forms which were not inserted heretofore, and which are not in the account forms of officers in England or Scotland, dealing with paying orders and with stocktaking.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am unable to answer the first and second inquiries. It does not appear to me that the integrity of Irish local officials is called in question, because the Accounts Orders provide for certain checks and safeguards which are essential to a proper system of financial administration. The original Accounts Orders were necessarily made before the Local Government Act came into operation, and the new Orders contain those amendments only which have been suggested by the experience gained since 1899.

Irish Lunatic Asylums Management.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Irish boards of guardians and District lunatic asylum committees have been put to the expense of engaging stocktakers to take stock of the provisions every half-year since the Local Government Act came into force; and, if so, will he explain why the guardians and members of the committee of management were not allowed, as in the grand jury days, to do this work; what is the amount of cost which this regulation of stocktaking has placed upon the ratepayers of Ireland per year; and whether, as the Local Government Board created the officers, they will recoup to the local authorities the amounts so expended.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It is required that persons other than those connected with the bodies named should be employed as stocktakers. The Local Government Board have no power to compel members of these bodies to perform the duty. No information is available as to the cost, but it is very trifling. It is not intended to recoup the local authorities concerned.

English and Scotch Appointments to the Irish Board of Agriculture.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will inquire from the Vice-President of the Irish Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction how many English and how many Scotch people are employed in Ireland by that Department and what is the gross amount of salary paid to them as far as they are within the knowledge of the Vice-President or ascertainable by him; and whether he will communicate to the House the number of the English and Scotch people so employed and the gross amount of salary paid to them.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The reply to this Question is in the negative. I have already informed the hon. and learned Member that the Department have no record of the nationality of their staff.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why cannot the right hon. Gentleman get the information from Sir Horace Plunkett, who must be in possession of the information, seeing that he made the appointments? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this Department is becoming an asylum for English and Scotch importations? Will the right hon. Gentleman answer that?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to comment on an Answer.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: No, Sir I will not offend again.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope not.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire of Sir Horace Plunkett?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I decline to do so. If I were responsible for an English Department I should take exactly the same course.

Boyle Union—Loan for Seed Potatoes.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution of the Boyle Board of Guardians, passed at their meeting on the 25th instant, asking for a supplementary loan for the supply of seed potatoes; and whether, seeing that a number of small farmers in the Boyle Union who are in need of seed potatoes will be deprived of same and suffer hardship if they do not receive them, he will take steps to ensure the granting of the supplementary loan asked for immediately.

Mr. WALTER LONG: By public notice issued on December 12th last, February 15th was fixed as the latest date for receiving applications for loans, and this date was subsequently extended to March 11th. Ample notice was therefore given. It is not considered expedient, at so late a date, to entertain further applications.

Somers Estate, Tullamore.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Robert Owens, who held an evicted farm on the Somers Estate, near Tullamore, King's County, has stated in a communication sent to him that he has bought this farm from the Estates Commissioners and has already paid his first instalment; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of again bringing the matter before the Estates Commissioners.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Westmeath portion only of this estate has been sold to the tenants, but no tenant named Robert Owens is amongst the number. No proceedings in respect of the King's County portion of the estate have come before the Commissioners.

Leinster Estate.

Mr. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the total amount of the proceeds of the sale of the Leinster Estate under the Purchase Act of 1903; when was the sale completed, and at what time did the Treasury pay over the cash to the trustees of the Leinster property; how much of this sum has been invested under the direction of or with the assent of the Public Trustee; and what are the securities in which the moneys have been invested, with the date of the investment.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Advances have been made, amounting to £674,526. The cash lodgments by tenants amounted to £5,235, making a total sum of £679,761. The sales were completed and the purchase moneys paid into the Bank of Ireland in April and May, 1904, and the funds were distributed in June and July. No portion of the purchase moneys was paid over to the Public Trustee, nor was any application made to him with regard to the investments which may have been made by the trustees of the estate.

Killarney Quarter Sessions—Absence of Crime in the County.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at the recent quarter sessions in Killarney, the County Court Judge was presented with white gloves in consequence of the crimelessness of the county; and if he proposes to take any steps to reduce the amount expended in connection with law officers and constabulary in consequence, so that the money saved may be used for other and more useful purposes.

Mr. WALTER LONG: It is true that white gloves were presented to the County Court Judge at Killarney Quarter Sessions, but this fact does not demonstrate the crimelessness of the county. In his address to the grand jury at the recent Spring Assizes, the learned Judge referred to an increase in the number of serious crimes attributable to the unsatisfactory condition of a portion of the county. Reductions in the strength of the constabulary force are made where the general circumstances permit such a step to be taken.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Did not the learned Judge say that if any disorder existed it was due to the action of the landlords?

[No Answer was returned.]

Goods Rates from Listowel to Liverpool.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the freight rate charged on goods from Listowel via Waterford to Liverpool is 30s. per ton, while from Newcastle West, twenty-four miles less land carriage by same route, it is 32s. 6d. per ton, and for butter in casks 30s. 0d. per ton; and, if so, will he say what is the reason for this difference.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Butter from Listowel to Liverpool via Waterford is conveyed at the exceptional rate of 30s. per ton, and the same rate is charged for the carriage of butter from Newcastle West to Liverpool. In the latter case the rate was reduced in October, 1902, from 32s. 6d. per ton.

Irish Goods Rates.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rate for the carriage of tea from London to Limerick is 34s. per ton, from London to Rathkeale, eighteen miles further than Limerick, it is 53s. 4d. per ton, and from London to Newcastle West, eight miles further than Rathkeale on same line, the rate is 46s. 7d. per ton; will he explain why is the difference between the rate to Limerick and Rathkeale 19s. 4d., or about 1s. per ton per mile, seeing that the rate to Newcastle West is 6s. 9d. less than to Rathkeale; and is he aware that the rate for tea from London to Rathkeale previous to the amalgamation of the Waterford and

Limerick Railway with the Great Southern and Western was 44s. 10d. per ton, or 8s. 6d. per ton less; and whether he will take any steps to remedy the alleged grievance.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Department are advised they have no authority under the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act of 1899 to intervene in questions affecting rates on such articles as imported tea. They have no information on the third inquiry. The reply to the last inquiry is in the negative.

White Estate, Bantry.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inspector who reported in connection with the reinstatement of evicted tenants on the White Estate, near Bantry, is a member of the firm of solicitors who had the carriage of sale of that estate.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that, so far as they are aware, the inspector who reported on this estate is not a member of the firm of solicitors referred to.

Mr. GILHOOLY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a member of this firm visited the estate and created animus against the evicted tenants. By what authority did he do that?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Bawnboy Union Relief Works.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the total amount which has been paid for tools and necessary implements in carrying out relief of distress works in the Bawnboy Union, county Cavan, to 31st March; and will he state from whom same were procured.

Mr. WALTER LONG; A sum of £11 2s. 0d., paid to Mr. Richard Dowler, of Belturbet.

Cavan Evicted Tenants.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if any evicted tenants have applied to be reinstated in county Cavan; if so, how many; and whether any of these people have been restored to their homes.

Mr. WALTER LONG: One hundred and fifty-four applications have been received, and three of the applicants have been reinstated.

Higher National Schools in Ireland.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any, and, if so, what steps have been taken to carry out the recommendation of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland in their recent Report, to establish higher national schools in suitable centres in Ireland.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The recommendation of the Commissioners is under consideration.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: When may we expect a decision?

Mr. WALTER LONG: It is impossible for me to say.

Singing and Science Teaching in Irish Schools.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland whether, seeing the necessity for better training of teachers of singing and science and the growing desire of the Irish people to have those subjects well taught to their children, steps will be taken to have the organisers in those subjects employed by the National Board retained in the service.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the popular taste for and need for instruction by the teachers in music, he will request the Commissioners to retain the services of the organiser of instruction in that subject.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The appointment of a permanent Inspector of Music has been approved. The term for which the temporary organisers in that subject were employed expired on 31st March, and it is not intended to renew their appointments. I have already explained that a head organiser and two assistants have been permanently retained for the training of teachers in elementary science.

Omagh School Inspector.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Pedlow, national school inspector of the Omagh circuit, has given "good" to any school within his district in which Irish is taught.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir.

Irish Training Colleges—Free Homes.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the claim repeatedly put forward by the standing committee of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland for free homes for the three training colleges at Belfast, Waterford, and Limerick, and the necessity for putting these colleges on the same footing as the other training colleges where the buildings have been paid for by the Government; and whether he can propose any settlement of this question.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir, my attention has been directed to the claims of the Catholic Bishops and to the declarations made by my predecessor in the matter. The question is engaging my consideration.

Irish National Schools—Building Rules.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when will the revised rules for the erection of national schools and teachers' residences in Ireland be issued.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I am unable to state the date of the issue of the rules referred to, but, as I have frequently informed hon. Members, every effort is being made to expedite a settlement of the question.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL; Are we to be kept waiting for these four or five years?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Trant Foley Estate, County Kerry.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer why it is that the tenants on the Trant Foley Estate, Tralee, county Kerry, have been asked to pay arrears of income-tax due by the landlord during the past six years; and whether tenants who are unable to pay this landlord debt will have their goods seized.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: As the arrears of income-tax on the Trant Foley Estate accrued partly whilst it was in the hands of a trustee and partly after it passed into the legal possession of the present owner, it was deemed advisable to recover the tax from the occupiers of the assessed properties as provided by the 17th Section of the Income-Tax Act of 1853. The tax so recovered can be deducted by the tenants from their next payment of rent. Twelve out of the fourteen tenants applied to have already paid the tax claimed from them. In no case has it been found necessary to recover by distress.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Will tenants unable to pay have their goods seized?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I understand we have only applied to fourteen. Twelve have already paid, one will do so in a short time, and only one has not answered.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Why not compel the landlord to pay?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I believe there are legal difficulties, but steps have been taken by which he will have to pay in the long run.

Irish Provident Assurance Company.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the policy holders of the Irish Provident Assurance Company, after seeing the reports published in the Press regarding that company, ceased paying their premiums; and that the policy holders of the town of Ballinasloe were paid a composition amounting to half the premiums paid by them; if so, will he say whether the balance-sheet of this company has been lodged with the Registrar of Friendly Societies or the responsible official of the Board of Trade; and, if so, what is his report upon it.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The Board of Trade are not aware of the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member. I have ascertained that this company is not registered in the Registry of Friendly Societies, Ireland, and no accounts have been lodged by the company with this Department. Some question has arisen as to the liability of the company to render returns under the Life Assurance Companies Acts, and the matter is under the consideration of the Irish Law Officers.

Galway Post Office—Employees' Petiton.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received the petition of the Galway Post Office staff bearing upon the treatment of the staff, the scale of wages, promotions, and appointments; and if he will state what action he proposes taking in the matter.

LORD STANLEY: I am considering the petition, and will inform the staff of my decision in due course.

Post Office Employees and the Irish Language.

MR. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the difficulty experienced in dealing with letters addressed in Irish, he will consider the advisability of offering some special inducements (similar to that offered for telegraph and technical qualifications) to sorters acquiring a knowledge of the Irish language; and whether he will exact as an essential qualification a knowledge of Irish from all applicants for postmasterships in Ireland.

LORD STANLEY: I do not think it necessary to take any such steps as those suggested by the hon. Member.

Learners as Season Substitutes in Irish Post Offices.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General under what conditions season substitutes are employed in Irish post offices; and, considering the number of learners fully qualified for appointment in Ireland, will he give these youths preference for substitute duty, wherever the necessity arises, over those who have no claims whatever on the Department.

LORD STANLEY: So far as circumstances allow the plan suggested by the hon. Member is already followed. The substitute duties are as a rule given to qualified learners.

Irish Signatures to Postal Orders.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the postmaster at Ballyhaunis has declined to cash a postal order for a gentleman named Francis Swift because the payee, who is an Irish speaker, and well known to the Post Office official there, affixed his signature to the order in Irish; whether the rules and regulations dealing with the cashing of postal orders specify in what language they should be receipted; and, if not, whether the postmaster referred to has exceeded his powers in refusing to pay the money.

LORD STANLEY: A signature in Irish upon a postal order may be accepted if the postmaster is satisfied that it is the signature of the payee. In the case to which the hon. Member refers the postmaster was unable to read the signature upon the order, and the person who tendered it refused to give him either a written or a verbal translation. He was therefore justified in refusing payment under the regulations, which authorise a postmaster to refuse payment of a postal order until he is satisfied that it is signed by the payee.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: Is the noble Lord aware that Mr. Swift has been receiving a large number of letters addressed in Irish, and that they are regularly delivered to him?

Lord STANLEY: I think Mr. Swift might have explained the signature.

The Unemployed Bill.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the measure relating to unemployment mentioned in the King's Speech will be introduced before Easter under the Ten Minute Rule.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): If the course suggested by the hon. Gentleman is one that meets with general approval I shall be happy to adopt it.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: In that event on what day will it be introduced?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot name a day, nor can I venture to say that so very important a Bill ought to be introduced under the Ten Minute Rule.

The Colonies and Trade Preference.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any negotiations were going on before 1902 between the Colonial Ministers and His Majesty's then Government of which the House is not as yet cognisant; what, if so, were these negotiations; and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any communications that passed in connection with them.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR was understood to decline to answer the Question.

The Volunteers.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can afford the House some other opportunity to express the sense of the country with regard to the proposal of the Secretary of State for War to discharge over 40,000 Volunteers, now serving their country without pay or reward, than that of reducing the Minister's salary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If my hon. and gallant friend desires some other opportunity than that naturally afforded by the Army Estimates, I am afraid that in the present state of public business I do not see my way to grant his request.

Government Departments and Trades Unions.

Mr. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend that no representations on the part of Government workers shall be received from any duly appointed representative, unless that representative is in the employment of the Government and is one of the aggrieved.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that, on questions personally affecting Government workers, it is not unusual, either at the War Office or the Admiralty, for the heads of Departments to receive deputations from trades unionists. In cases where a man or men have any complaint to make every opportunity is given to them to appeal to the Department. It is not the practice to allow outside interference in such cases.

Mr. BENN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the statement made in the House last Thursday by the Financial Secretary to the War Office with regard to certain proceedings adopted at the Government Clothing Factory?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is not in order to refer to that.

Mr. Gerald Loder's Directorships.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Mr. Gerald Loder, the newly appointed Junior Lord of the Treasury is to retain in conjunction with his position in the Government the positions of director in four public companies, of which one is the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, and another the Standard Bank of South Africa; and whether he is aware that Mr. Loder's accession to the Government brings the number of directorships in public companies held by members of the present Administration to seventy-one; and whether he proposes to take any, and, if so, what steps, having regard to the frequent demands for that reform, to secure that the retention of public company directorships be rendered incompatible with the holding of the office of Minister of the Crown.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no knowledge of my hon. friend's connection with the companies to which the hon. Gentleman refers, but I am quite certain he will allow no outside engagement to interfere with his official duties.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to give notice that I will move to reduce Mr. Loder's salary by the amount of the fees he receives as a director.

Feeding of School Children.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division designed to empower local education authorities to make provision out of the funds at their disposal for the feeding of hungry children, and to empower them also, where it may seem desirable, to recover the cost from the parents and guardians of children so fed; and whether, having regard to the unanimous recommendations of the Physical Training Royal Commission (Scotland), 1903, and of the Physical Deterioration (1904) Committee, he will grant facilities this session for the further progress of this measure.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Gentleman is aware, a Committee has been appointed to examine into the facts of this question; and I do not think that, pending the Report of that Committee, I can make any statement on the subject.

Sir JOHN GORST: Is it not a fact that the Committee appointed by the Board of Education is specially precluded from considering any scheme which would cast a charge on the public funds?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The main object of the Committee is to inquire into the facts, and it is, among other things, a real knowledge of the facts that we require before dealing with a subject which is of itself of a difficult character and touches very many thorny problems on all sides.

Dr. MACNAMARA: Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any prospect that this Committee will report before the close of the present session?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I cannot well make any promise on that subject. It does not rest with me.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): If any facilities are given to a Bill on this subject, will they be given to that introduced by the hon. Member for Hoxton?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that any suggestion has come from this bench that facilities should be given to any Bill.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: In the event of this Bill being introduced under the Ten Minute Rule, could not all the Bills on the subject be referred by agreement to a Select or Grand Committee?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Ten Minute Rule has nothing to do with the question. Indeed, the Bill might be introduced without any speech at all, under the privilege which private Members enjoy. Moreover, it is not the practice to refer any Bill to a Select Committee until after it has been read a second time. That is the rule under which we habitually work. I do not say whether it is a good or bad one.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Has the First Lord of the Treasury any information to give as to the course of business?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I have any information of which the House is not already in possession. We are pledged to give the Government time this week to Army Estimates. Should the Estimates about which most interest is felt be concluded within Government time, I will, of course, do my best to consult the wishes of the House as to what other Votes shall be taken. Next Monday we take the Budget.

THE EASTER HOLIDAYS.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the First Lord make any statement as to the probable commencement of the Easter Holidays?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I have no information to give. The limits within which our chances lie are narrow, but I cannot mention the date at present.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 110.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 110.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 136.]

WHALE FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 137.]

NEW BILLS.

SALE OF COKE BILL.

"To amend the Weights and Measures Act, 1889, respecting the Sale of Coke by weight," presented by Mr. Rose; supported by Mr. Raymond Greene; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 11th May, and to be printed. [Bill 138.]

LONDON HOSPITALS (EXEMPTION FROM RATES) BILL.

"To provide for the exemption of Hospitals in London from local Rates," presented by Mr. Hayes Fisher; supported by Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Sir Harry Samuel, Captain Jessel, and Mr. James Bailey; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 139.]

LICENSING ACT (1902) (REGISTRATION OF CLUBS) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Licensing Act, 1902, in respect of the striking of clubs off the register," presented by Mr. Worsley-Taylor; supported by Sir John Dorington, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Cripps, Sir Robert Reid, and Mr. Ashton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 140.]

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham) said he desired, in moving to reduce the Vote by £1,000,000, to direct attention to the fact that the Estimates for this year were the greatest Army Estimates ever laid before the House of Commons in a time of peace. These Estimates had now reached an aggregate of £30,000,000 in round figures. They embodied an increase of £1,000,000, roughly, on the Estimates of last year, and, although they were nearly as much as the whole of the Estimates for the Navy, they were now witnessing the spectacle of a considerable diminution in naval expenditure and a large increase in Army Votes. The increase in the Estimates was greater than might be supposed by those who only gave them casual study. It was not at all correct to attribute that increase, as he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was led into attributing it, to the increased provision for the new guns. That tardy provision, no doubt, was the item in the Estimates most easy to justify, but it was not the reason for the increase. The completion of the purchases under the Mowatt programme of stores and military supplies which fell in this year released a sum of £400,000 from the Special Charges. Further windfalls of £217,000 in respect of surplus ammunition, and of £334,000 under the heading of clothing, made a total of £961,000 which might be considered as a windfall for the right hon. Gentleman, which would almost entirely have met the charge for the new artillery. The increase in the Estimates was in respect of constant and continuing charges which would affect the Estimates in future years. That was a very grave situation, and fully justified the reduction which he had put on the Paper. The Estimates were all the more surprising in view of the explicit pledges which the Secretary of State for War gave only six months ago, on July 14th last. Those promises were explicit, liberal, and full. Then, when the Army Estimates were £29,000,000, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It is the universal belief that not only should this increase be arrested, but that the total should be diminished; that is my own personal view. I have always felt we are devoting a larger sum than we need devote to the service of the Army. I have had that lesson enforced on me for many years, and I would remind the Committee that if you are going to reduce expenditure you must reduce something that costs money."

The right hon. Gentleman also spoke of the Army as—

> "One of the most costly military machines ever devised."

Yes, £29,000,000 was then considered by the right hon. Gentleman to be excessive. Now, £30,000,000 was not so considered! The right hon. Gentleman would do well to spend an afternoon in reading the excellent speech he delivered on July 14th last. The right hon. Gentleman then said, also, that a certain number of the Line battalions were superfluous, and that, in his opinion, the Regular Army, as well as every branch, must be called upon to make some contribution towards a reduction. The right hon. Gentleman, if he had not been able to fulfil his pledges in favour of economy, should be careful not to suggest, as he had done the other day, that those persons who to-day held the opinions he expressed so strongly last July were unpatriotic and improper persons.

The Secretary of State for War's reason for the great increase in the Army Estimates was a most remarkable one. They were told that the United Kingdom could not be invaded; that this fortunate island had become permanently secure from invasion, and was no longer liable to the dangers which confronted other nations which had to guard against an invasion of territory. This fortunate little island was, they were told, absolutely secure from any attack of that kind. And yet they were asked to vote larger Army Estimates than those of France, Germany, Austria, or Italy, to whose existence their armies were absolutely vital. The Army reformers of two years ago, whose activity in the House the Committee might not have forgotten, had behind their manœuvres and tactics one object. They sought to reduce military expenditure and the military forces. With a view to obtaining that result they propounded two important propositions, one that we did not want a large Regular Army for home defence, and the second that the defence of this island could be entrusted to the Militia, Volunteers, and Yeomanry, if rendered thoroughly efficient. The Prime Minister did not agree with them in those days, but agreed with the present Secretary of State for India, and supported that right hon. Gentleman in a project which provided three Army Corps for home defence. The right hon. Gentleman, now the Secretary of State for India, used the "fat cow" argument against them. "Why," he asked, "should we lie down like a fat cow behind our ironclad Fleet?" He also used the "stiffener" argument; he spoke of the necessity for 30,000 stiffeners to strengthen the Auxiliary Forces when the Regular Army had been convoyed out of the country. Those opinions had been very largely abandoned by the Prime Minister; they had converted him; and, like all converts, as he himself was sometimes reminded, the Prime Minister displayed a tendency to carry his newly acquired opinions to great extremes. He now said that we required no Army at all for home defence, as invasion was impossible. It seemed a very simple thing if they looked at it in that way, but it would have saved a lot of trouble if the right hon. Gentleman had only found it out before. Still it showed the enormous advantage of applying a first-rate dialectical mind to these strategic questions.

There was nothing more remarkable than this doctrine of faith healing. The principle was very simple; you said a thing was so, and it was so; or you said it was not so, and it was not so. He had heard of people who, on awaking in the morning, said with great earnestness, "Youth, health, vigour," and believed that they derived some accession of those qualities in consequence. The Government were the most ardent disciples of that belief. The Prime Minister was convinced that, if he said a question was not before the country, it was not before the country; if he said a Resolution was of no importance, it was of no importance. The Secretary of State for India firmly believed that if he said he had six Army Corps, there were in fact six Army Corps; and the present Secretary of State for War believed that if he said with sufficient emphasis and frequency, and on sufficiently high authority, that these islands could not be invaded, we should thereby become absolutely secure. The right hon. Gentleman ought really to instruct the Chaplain-General to preach a discourse on the inspiring theme of the application of the principles of Christian science to the problem of Imperial defence. The country had been officially declared secure against invasion—not a dinghy, which held five men, let alone 5,000 men, could land on these shores without our permission. The Committee of Defence had decided that, and who, be the Briton or foreigner, would dare dispute the decision of the Committee of National Defence? The Prime Minister, whose unique qualifications were rightly acknowledged, had confirmed their decision, the Army Council had acquiesced in it, and actual proof had been supplied by experiments in disembarkation conducted at Clacton-on-Sea.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Do you maintain the contrary proposition?

MR. CHURCHILL said he was simply stating the right hon. Gentleman's arguments. Upon this comfortable hypothesis the right hon. Gentleman approached the question of the Volunteers, the Militia, the Yeomanry and the other forces of the Crown. He told them that the Volunteers were tied to the soil, that they could not be sent abroad, and as nobody could possibly get at them, as not even the five men in a dinghy, or 5,000, could set foot on this island without our permission, he argued that we might safely reduce the force by 45,000 men, and he submitted that as absolute logic. But absolute logic should carry the right hon. Gentleman a great deal further. Why should the right hon. Gentleman maintain at great cost 200,000 men tied to the soil, when they could not possibly encounter enemies who arrived in larger numbers than five at a time? There used to be a scheme of mobilisation for home defence in existence. Had it been abandoned? Had it been absolutely destroyed or torn up?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No.

MR. CHURCHILL asked what was the use of getting the clerks of the War Office to make out a plan for meeting a contingency which the Army Council, the Committee of National Defence, and the Prime Minister collectively declared could never arise? The right hon. Gentleman's hint that there was a scheme for home defence in existence filled him with anxiety. With regard to this faith cure, the faith must be absolute, or the cure did not work. The slightest shadow of doubt across the mind of the patient or the disciple, and the efficacy of the treatment was entirely destroyed. The truth was that the right hon. Gentleman dare not face the logical conclusion to which his argument led. Perhaps in the right hon. Gentleman's heart of hearts the spectacle of this vast unfortified capital, the greatest, the wealthiest city in the world, the depository of half the title-deeds of civilisation, within sixty miles of a score of landing places for the enemy, filled him with some feeling of disquietude and stirred doubts and questionings which marred the smooth reasoning of his assertions and reassertions. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman had not forgotten the late Lord Salisbury's declaration at the

Mansion House four or five years ago, that great empires had fallen not by injury in their outlying provinces, but by blows dealt at their hearts. It did appear to him that the great problem of Imperial defence was not to be settled by chopping logic or by applying the rule of thumb. They had before them a practical, business-like proposition. They had on the one hand a statement of the various perils to which the nation might be exposed, though there were differences as to their nature and the direction whence they might be apprehended, and also differences in the degree of possibility and probability. There were also certain necessary duties which the Army had to discharge; there were foreign garrisons to be provided and proper reliefs to be circulated. It was necessary further to arrange for those minor expeditions which were so often necessary when hon. Gentlemen opposite were in power. They had to make provision at home for the maintenance of the Royal dignity, and for ensuring order and public security. They had, on the other hand, certain resources, and though those resources might be sufficient they were limited and definite. They had only a certain amount of money which could properly be spared, having regard to other urgent needs. There was a supply of recruits more or less limited, which notoriously varied with the labour market, and even an increase of pay did not secure the larger supply anticipated. They had a certain number of Militia—and the right hon. Gentleman had tried but failed to increase them—and a certain number of Volunteers whom the right hon. Gentleman had tried to reduce and had succeeded. [Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER dissented.] He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman objected, but in the Estimates for this year he had embodied the policy of reduction. These various forces had grown up year by year in this country and some of them were very antiquated indeed. They fitted in with existing customs and arrangements and were part of our national life, and it was the business of the War Minister to adjust and train them so as to make them more flexible instruments to guard our coasts against danger and to get from them the greatest development of war power.

There were three kinds of reform of the Army. The first was that which partook of the nature of spending money. That that kind of reform had been steadily pursued for years was seen in the enormous increase of expenditure on every single branch of Army organisation. Then there were the reforms which could be made simply by the use of the pen. The Secretary of State for War sat in his office and called some old thing by a new name. For instance, the Commander-in-Chief was called the "Chief Inspector-General" or "First Military Member" or "Chief of the Staff;" the Quartermaster-General was renamed the "Third Military Member"; the duties of the War Office and the Staff were rearranged, and the troops were called "divisions," "districts," or "Army Corps," but whatever they were called, it was done simply by writing on paper. The third kind of reform was rather rare; it was of a nature of which the country had had very little experience of late. It was reform which was based upon the perception of some new principle, and which produced greater war power in proportion to the money and the resources at our disposal. The great reform of Mr. Cardwell was of that nature. The abolition of purchase—taking the Army out of pawn as it was called—the introduction of short service, and the institution of the territorial system, were three reforms of the Army which undoubtedly had resulted in a great increase of war power without any extra expenditure of money. He would like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that all change in the position and character of the various land forces was in itself injurious and involved a diminution of war power. Change in itself was vexatious and restrictive of power. It produced friction and dissatisfaction in the Army. While it was taking place the officers were occupied with it and could not devote their attention to the training of the men. The whole economy and discipline of the units were affected. Yet in the last five years we had had an era of tireless tinkerings. The hon. and gallant Member for Essex had on many occasions drawn attention to the extraordinary caprice with which uniforms were changed. But much more serious changes had been made. The service of the Army had been changed four times in four years, and was about to be changed again. The regulations affecting the discipline of the troops had been altered and readjusted, the system of pay had been changed, deferred pay had been abolished, and the whole method of the administration of the War Office had been altered twice over from top to bottom, both with regard to system and *personnel*. Some regular battalions had been created and then abandoned, five garrison batteries were formed at great expense, and special barrack accommodation provided, and they, too, were now to be abandoned. The immense diminution of war power resulting from these wild experiments had been attended by discontent among the officers and men and the general relaxation of the discipline and the efficiency of the Army.

Parliament was asked this year to assent to Estimates of £30,000,000 and a series of brand-new reforms affecting all three branches of His Majesty's land forces—a great reduction in the Volunteers, a gigantic experiment with the Militia, and a revolution in the Regular Army. The Secretary of State for War did not come to them exactly on the full tide of successful experiment. The right hon. Gentleman came with a record of miscalculation, mismanagement, and fertile incapacity for which no parallel could be found in the history of any other Department of the State. That was true, notwithstanding that hon. Gentlemen opposite laughed, and he defied any one to point to another policy pursued by any Department in the last fifty years marked by such vacillation and such an enormous accretion of burden. The plan of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the Militia involved a liability for service oversea; a queer proposal surely, coming after a war in which nearly the whole of the Militia did serve voluntarily and with distinction over the sea. It was strange he should wish to expose the Militia to this arduous service when he lost no opportunity of telling them what a rabble they were, and how imperfectly trained, and while he talked, too, of the great scarcity of officers and the singularly poor physique of its men. When the Militia Bill came before the House it would, of course, be fully considered; but he was bound to say that it was a very surprising thing to make such a great departure, not as an integral part of a scheme of Army reform, but as a purely detached proposition. The right hon. Gentleman practically admitted that his proposal with regard to the Militia was a leap in the dark. There had been experiments in regard to the Militia before. The late Secretary of State for War wished to increase the force; the present War Secretary desired to diminish it, and that was how continuity of policy was secured. The right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War offered a bounty of £3 a man, which he believed would have the effect of raising the Militia from 98,000 to 150,000.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): As a matter of fact, I proposed to raise the Militia to 150,000, including the establishment of a Militia Reserve.

MR. CHURCHILL said the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to give a bounty of £3 a man cost £300,000 a year, and it would continue to cost that amount so long as that bounty was paid. But the Militia to-day were fewer in number than when the bounty was offered. So far as the taxpayer was concerned all that money was absolutely pitched away, and, after all, £300,000 was a very great sum which could have been spent on the new rifle, or on the new artillery. That was not an encouraging fact, and it seemed to him that it showed how very dangerous it was to undertake experiments with the old constitutional or Volunteer forces, because they could not be sure that the money spent would produce the effect which was expected, nor could they be sure that new regulations would not divert from those forces the classes accustomed to go into them.

Now he came to the Regular Army. The right hon. Gentleman had put forward a brand new scheme for the Regular Army. The right hon. Gentleman was a great admirer of what he would call dualism. The right hon. Gentleman was in favour of a dual Regular Army. He was in favour of two classes of Volunteers—the first class and the second class, but that inspiring idea had been abandoned.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER dissented.

Mr. CHURCHILL said there were to be two classes of Volunteers according to their merits.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, no!

Mr. CHURCHILL said the right hon. Gentleman had at any rate instituted two kinds of generals in the Army—fighting generals and other generals. It was a most novel idea. It was one which was much more likely to have come from China than from Japan, and the plan on which the Army was now to be administered was the same system as that on which a gentleman obtained a horse from a jobber—he obtained and rode the animal, all responsibility being taken by the owner of the horse. One gentleman was to see after the whole administration of the troops, and the other man was to fight with them in the field. In fact, it was the regular subdivision of the trainer and the jockey. That was a truly wonderful plan, and it showed that the right hon. Gentleman was a great admirer of dualism. Now he proposed to introduce two kinds of Regulars—the first-class Regular who was to have all the fun and all the fighting, and the second-class Regular who was to do all the drudgery and supply the numbers. He agreed with the noble Lord the Member for Ealing, who, it might be remembered, made a remarkable speech to the House last session in which he showed that the setting up of two kinds of battalions would draw all the best officers into the favoured corps and give them an unnecessary amount of *esprit de corps* which would be obtained at the expense of the ordinary run of the Army. He believed that the principle of drawing a distinction between men serving in the same branch of His Majesty's forces was wholly vicious, and he earnestly hoped the Committee would not sanction that principle.

When they examined the larger aspect of this Army scheme he would like to ask what was to be the cost of the full execution of the plan proposed. Had anybody seen the figures? Had there ever been a financial estimate made?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to answer in the affirmative.

Mr. CHURCHILL said he was very much surprised. He was not at all aware that there had been an estimate made. The right hon. Gentleman's dual Army scheme was not a new idea; for thirty years it had been agitated, but Cabinet after Cabinet, War Minister after War Minister, drawn from both of the great Parties of the State, had examined it, studied it carefully, and all, without exception, had rejected it. Of course, it was quite true that we should like to have two separate Armies for our very widely different duties in home and foreign service. For the United Kingdom we wanted an Army of great expansive power, and that could only be obtained by short service. For garrisoning India we required a Regular Army of seasoned soldiers with service for a period that would not necessitate our bringing them backward and forward too often. But the economy of combining the two Armies into one, of dovetailing them into each other, and making them separately assist each other in all the numerous functions they had in common, in making the home battalions train the drafts for the foreign battalions, and the foreign battalions train the Reservists, who on mobilisation were added to the home battalions in order to strengthen and stiffen the young soldiers of which they were composed—the advantages and economy of that system were enormous, and the gain in proportion to the money spent had been frequently demonstrated. Although there were admitted inconveniences, the single army argument had always hitherto held the field. The single army argument embodied a compromise and had all the virtues and vices of a compromise. It could be expressed in the formula, 7 A, 5 R—seven years Army service and five years' Reserve service. That was the period of service found in practice to be the best to reconcile the conflicting and often divergent needs of India and the United Kingdom. Before passing from that subject he should like to say that they had always been told that a balance of battalions was essential to this scheme. He did not think that was true. It was generally admitted last year that it was not true. That had been a fertile source of waste, and a convenient lever for further expenditure. But it would be quite possible to group battalions into groups of eight, of which five might be kept abroad and three at home. That suggestion would enable a reduction of thirty battalions to be made without altering the working of the system, although he thoroughly admitted the economy of the system was greatest, highest, and most perfect when an exact equilibrium between the battalions was maintained.

There were many hon. Gentlemen in the House who were more competent to speak with regard to the Volunteers than he professed to be. He would only ask the Committee to remember how cheap they were, how petty was the saving, and how fearful was the diminution in men which attended the reduction now proposed. He would ask the Committee to remember that while to European States which had land frontiers time was vital to their mobilisation and every day was precious to them, in this country, with the advantages of the sea, we should always have a longer period at our disposal, and our arrangements need not be made to enable us to realise our full strength as Continental Powers must do. After all the talk of the Volunteers not being properly trained, he would say that if they were six weeks or six months under canvas with conditions of war prevailing in some part of the world they would become a very different force from what they were now. He asked the Committee to remember what these men did for us in the South African War, not only those who went abroad, but those who stayed at home in camp and enabled us to send the last division of Regular troops out of the country. The Regular Army in time of war would depend on the number of Volunteer soldiers we had in this country, for he was quite certain that in time of war this country would never stake its independence and integrity upon any decision of any Council of National Defence, however costly it might be. He asked the Committee finally to remember that the Volunteers, a monument of civic patriotism which was the unique possession of our country, were our principal and surest bulwark against the foul tyranny of conscription, from which we had been free.

Whatever objections might be urged against the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman as a whole must be urged more strongly against proceeding with them piecemeal. The short-service Army, which was the foundation of the system, had been postponed indefinitely. In answer to a Question the other day, the right hon. Gentleman said it had been postponed for eight or nine months. That was a long time and many things might happen. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman on public grounds—at present he had got power and could do practically what he wished—to at least delay the measures affecting the Volunteers and the Militia until the scheme relating to the Army as a whole was finally determined. Surely it was not unreasonable to ask him not to injure them until he was prepared with the short-service Army, which was so largely to take their place. The steps he proposed to take would be irrevocable, the injury might easily be irreparable. The Volunteers and Militia could not be discouraged and disbanded in all directions without inflicting an injury on the whole force, which it would take many years of patient effort to repair. There was one vital feature of this subject which ought not to be omitted. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman was inclined to make too sweeping assertions for a person who occupied so responsible a post. During the recess the right hon. Gentleman permitted himself to say—

> "The condition of the British Army was a danger to the very existence of the Empire; that we wanted the best and had the very worst."

But he told his would-be constituents at Croydon that—

> "Enemies of England all over the world would rejoice at the advent of a Liberal Government to power."

In that general chorus of jubilation there would, at any rate, be one regret. Foreign nations would have to rely for their information upon their own intelligence departments, and they would not be able to avail themselves of the very excellent and candid reports which they had furnished from time to time by the British Minister for War.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The words the hon. Member quotes come from one of the most distinguished members of the Army Intelligence Department.

Mr. CHURCHILL remarked that the right hon. Gentleman, at any rate, put them forward on his own authority. Then the right hon. Gentleman told them that if the command of the sea were lost there would be nothing for it but to surrender within six days. It was, perhaps, not worth while to speculate upon such hideous nightmares as that, but he was not at all sure they could predicate with absolute certainty that they would be ready to surrender within such a very short time as that. The right hon. Gentleman was very scornful about the service clubs and service Members.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I said nothing about the service Members.

Mr. CHURCHILL said the right hon. Gentleman spoke of service clubs, and service Members were all members of those clubs. They deserved something better from the right hon. Gentleman than suggestions that their patriotism and intelligence were not what they ought to be. The right hon. Gentleman said one man in circumstances where they might depend upon him might be more valuable than ten upon whom they might or might not depend. Had the right hon. Gentleman already forgotten South Africa? Would anyone contend that one Regular soldier on whom the War Office could depend was worth more for effective service than any ten Australians, or Canadians, or Imperial Light Horseman, whom nobody dreamt before the war would give their services at all? No one could say what this mighty Empire could develop in the face of sufficient need and cause. It was pedantry to suppose their resources were limited by the records kept at the War Office of the number of men available.

The right hon. Gentleman said they did not want an Army for home defence, but for India. If that were true, and £30,000,000 a year were imposed on the people of this country for the sole defence of India, it would arouse most serious discussion It had always hitherto been understood that India should provide for her own defence. Of course she might count on the backing of Great Britain in time of peril; and that we would strain every nerve and make every sacrifice to aid her defence of her North-West Frontier. But nothing could remove the primary and permanent responsibility and obligation which was upon every people for the defence, security, and safeguarding of their own soil. And in the case of India, it was not merely a moral but a practical responsibility. Many months, he was told by people who understood these things, possibly a year, and even more than a year, would elapse after the declaration of war before the destruction of the enemy's navy was so complete as to enable that tremendous operation of transporting 300,000 or 400,000 men to the other side of the earth through seas possibly swept by hostile cruisers. And, in the meanwhile, India would be depending on her own resources, however vast, however complete our preparations in this country might be. He hoped this aspect of the situation had not escaped the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and the various Committees of which he was a member He did not join himself with the alarmists, who were always imagining that we were on the eve of Armageddon. He did not think that strategic railways carried the problem of the defence of India into a new plane, nor a plane which was bound to have been unforseen for many years. After all, the central facts of the situation had been unaltered, and a long period must elapse after the declaration of war before either Russia or England could bring their main power to bear in the struggle. It was unnecessary to alarm ourselves by any features which were contained in the general international situation or by the two new facts created by the Anglo-French agreement and the astounding drama of the war in the Far East. These could not make in the mind of any reasonable man our military situation less secure than it was. For nearly a quarter of a century we had had alarms raised and a great quantity of nonsense had been poured out in regard to Russian designs on India. When we reflected on the perils through which that dynasty was passing, on the sufferings of her people, on the financial embarrassments which must, for many years, harass her Government, it did not seem unreasonable to calculate that our dangers in respect to the defence of India were more remote in point of time and probabilities than ever they were before.

He commended this reduction to the Committee. He did not say that £1,000,000 was the whole economy which might be effected, or that it would satisfy hon. Gentlemen who sat on those benches. He did not say that £1,000,000 would satisfy the country, which had heard pledges of reduction from the right hon. Gentleman; but it was a substantial sum, and nobody who voted for it would be committed to that sum as the whole policy of reduction of expenditure on the Army. If he were to prevail with the Committee in regard to this reduction—and he would be optimistic to assume that he would—he would point out that there would be no difficulty in carrying it into practical effect. After all, a reduction in the number of units was admitted last year by the right hon. Gentleman as indispensable so far as the United Kingdom was concerned. No discharges of soldiers now serving would be necessary. All that would have to be done was to raise the standard of recruiting, the enlisting would then automatically fall. Moreover, with a reduced demand for recruits the increased pay lately offered would begin to operate beneficially by giving a greater power of selection, and, consequently, an improvement in quality which would be a compensating gain and result in further and larger economies in the direction of a diminution of those perfectly useless men now enlisted at so great annual cost. He moved this reduction in the interests of economy and as a sincere, solemn, and deliberate protest against the errors and miscalculations of the military policy during the last five years, and as a warning, perhaps a vain attempt, to stop all those ill-advised changes which ill-affected every branch of our land forces, and particularly the Volunteers and Militia.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,101,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Churchill*).

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said he did not, as a rule, agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite in the strictures upon the Government which he addressed to the House. There was a time when he did not very often agree with his remarks, but he confessed that although he was still, unlike the hon. Member, a supporter of the present Government, he did agree with a great deal that had just fallen from him in his exceedingly, able, eloquent, and weighty speech. He did not propose to vote for the reduction, because he did not himself see any necessity had been proved for reducing the number of the Regular Forces; but he held that the present administration of the War Office had been and was in many respects most unfortunate. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, although he credited him with the very highest motives in his desire to do everything that was best for the Army, had succeeded in discouraging every branch of the service—Regulars, Yeomanry, Militia, and Volunteers. The position was now very serious. He was not going to follow the hon. Gentleman opposite in speaking generally on the whole Army question, because he did not profess to have a detailed knowledge of Army affairs, and he was very careful not to speak on matters of this sort which he did not himself understand. But he could speak with knowledge on the Militia, and he thought that the treatment of that force by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War of the Militia had been more unfortunate than his treatment of any other branch of the service. The right hon. Gentleman was understood to have a theory that many connected with the Auxiliary Forces were sufficiently unpatriotic to fight for their own unit to the detriment of the reform of the Army generally. He hoped his right hon. friend would not accuse him of taking that line. He spoke for the Militia because he knew something of the Militia. If the right hon. Gentleman proved to him that the Militia was useless, that it was redundant, that it stood in the way of other and greater reforms which should be affected, he should be the first to say, "Let the Militia go." But in taking the view which the right hon. Gentleman had taken, in saying that the Militia was useless, that it ought to be abolished or altered out of all recognition, the right hon. Gentleman, in his opinion, had entirely misread the whole history of recent years. The Militia sent out 51,000 men to South Africa during the late war. In addition to that, they garrisoned a large part of the Mediterranean stations and thereby set free the Regular troops which enabled Lord Roberts to strike hard at the Boers. Further, the Militia practically garrisoned the whole of this country during the war. The right hon. Gentleman was certain that this country was never going to be invaded, and that the Militia garrison was absolutely not wanted. But he asked the Committee what would have been the feeling of the country if the whole of the Regular Army except striplings of recruits had been sent to South Africa, and no force like the Militia had been there to take their place, even if invasion was not possible? He ventured to think that the Militia had done a great service in the late crisis.

He asked what the right hon. Gentleman was going to do with the Militia, the Yeomanry, the Volunteers, and, most emphatically, with the Regular Army? This uncertainty was doing great harm to the whole service. The hon. Gentleman opposite had pointed out the innumerable changes which had been made in the service in recent years. Moreover, changes were always being threatened, but not carried out. Nobody knew what the right hon. Gentleman really proposed to do. Last year the right hon. Gentleman had a plan for abolishing the Militia, but the opposition of the House was too strong and the right hon. Gentleman was not able to proceed with it. That encouraged him to raise his voice once more, and to hope that that scheme was finally dropped. But the right hon. Gentleman apparently still believed that the best plan would be to level up the Militia battalions to the standard of the Line, and make them the nucleus of the home-service Army. Was the right hon. Gentleman, if he got the chance, still inclined to try and carry out that scheme? The Committee and the country ought to know. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the unsatisfactory condition of the Militia; but nothing could make it more unsatisfactory than the uncertainty that prevailed as to the future, both among officers and men. The right hon. Gentleman, in the Memorandum which he issued with the Estimates said that—

> "The condition of the Militia remained unsatisfactory."

Whose fault was that? The Militia or the War Office? For many years the War Office had never given the Militia a chance of being satisfactory. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that—

> "A considerable portion of the Militia Artillery is redundant for defence purposes."

Now, why were they redundant? No explanation was given of that criticism. The right hon. Gentleman did not say what part was redundant; and he left every unit of the Militia Artillery to wonder whether they were included in that sweeping statement. And then the right hon. Gentleman went on—

> "It is obvious that if the Militia is to be used for service abroad, it must undergo a longer period of training than at present, and must be provided with a larger number of trained officers than it at present possesses."

From what had been said with regard to the Militia one would have imagined that they had never been sent abroad before; but 60,000 of them had served abroad and had conducted themselves creditably in field and garrison duty. What steps had the right hon. Gentleman or his predecessor taken to provide more training for officers and men? The right hon. Gentleman said more trained officers were required, and yet from the Militia on duty at Malta six officers were taken for the Line. Longer training was necessary, but nothing was said of the time to be given; it was left vague, as everything else. Year after year suggestions were made about battalions to be abolished, but nobody knew whether his battalion was on the black list. In another place the Government had a Bill for making service abroad compulsory for the Militia. The Militia had hardly ever failed to volunteer for such service in the past, and they would willingly accept such a proposal, but there was no great reform in that. Without it the War Office could accomplish what they required. The Militia had no desire to stand in the way of Army reform, but if they were to be of any use they should receive some encouragement.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): I sympathise with the hon. Member in the resentment he has expressed, or, if that is too strong a word, in the regret he has expressed, and his deep sense of the injury that is being done by the state of uncertainty which the Government have created in respect to the Militia. He must, however, not be surprised, for uncertainty marks the whole policy of the Government at present. It is bad for everything, bad for trade, bad for the Army, bad for the Militia; but the one policy in which the Government are successful is in prolonging uncertainty. I say the Government, for I do not blame the Secretary of State for War for deliberately prolonging the uncertainty, and, indeed, he has expressed his views far more clearly than the views of the Government have been expressed; but in order that he may escape from the charge we must ask him for whom does he speak? Is it for the Government, or does he give his own opinion merely? Last year we assumed—too much assumed, perhaps—that he was speaking on behalf of the Government, and we expected that greater changes would follow: but it is always the case, we have to hear a policy from each Minister separately, unsupported by his colleagues. I know that the Prime Minister has urgent and, no doubt, prolonged duties elsewhere; and my object is not to complain so much of his absence as to ask, when he is absent, do we get the opinion of the Government? For it seems to me the Government have come to be in the unfortunate position of the Tsar, whose habit it is to see his Ministers separately, and each Minister speaks without reference to the views of his colleagues. But that cannot be satisfactory to this House in the settlement of a policy. We are left altogether in doubt as to the proposals of last year as compared with those of this year, and in still more doubt as to how far they have the sanction of the Government. We know that the Government approved of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor, for the Prime Minister took an active part in defending them. We resisted the proposals because we thought them unsuitable, we gave them strong opposition, and our objections the Government now hold—or if they do not hold with our opinion they act as if they do. I should like to know in relation to the Estimates this year how much money has been spent in initiating the proposals of the Secretary of State for India which has now been rendered an absolutely useless expenditure by this change of policy.

Mr. Griffith Boscawen.

From the present Secretary of State for War we were led by his earlier speeches to expect great changes, and great changes rapidly. But now he tells us, not in the tone of one who advises us that we may expect great changes soon, to be thankful that a beginning has been made. No doubt we have had some changes; the War Office has been reorganised by the right hon. Gentleman. The War Office needed to be reorganised, because nobody spoke more scathingly of its conditions previous to its reform than the right hon. Gentleman, and it was generally understood that the War Office was more or less in confusion. The right hon. Gentleman has, no doubt, stirred it up a great deal; but when you stir confusion it is possible, instead of producing order, to produce chaos. However perfect the reorganisation of the War Office may be on paper, what I feel a little doubt about is whether it is working with the smoothness and freedom from confusion and with the perfect order that the Secretary of State no doubt believes it is working with. It is not enough to reorganise; the reorganisation must work smoothly.

When we come to the higher matters of policy on which the size of our Army and the expenditure on our Army depend, we have no result at all. We have no economy at all in the sense of a reduction of expenditure. The Secretary of State for War tells us we cannot have economy unless we reduce something which costs money, and that something must be numbers of men. Then he says it is unpatriotic to reduce the Regular Army; so that cannot be done. It might be patriotic, but it is not possible, owing either to the sense of the House or of the country to reduce the Militia; therefore that cannot be done. The one thing he assures the House he can succeed in doing is to reduce the Volunteers. There I take issue with him on a matter of policy. This Government has been liberal in promises for the last few years that they would reduce expenditure on the Army. If they went out to-day they would be known as the Government which promised to reduce expenditure on the Army but succeeded in reducing expenditure on the Navy. Not only has there been an entire failure to reduce expenditure on the Army, but the Army Estimates are the biggest that we have ever had in time of peace. The Secretary of State for War will no doubt say it is not enough for us merely to declare our differences; that we ought to give some indication of the direction in which our minds would work if we were in a position to apply a policy of our own. I have always hoped that we should get some results from the new Committee of Defence. It is a thing to be judged by its results, and until we have the results we cannot feel sure that the Committee of Defence has been justified.

Two results, I think, we have got from them. One is a declaration from the Prime Minister that we may put the question of a serious invasion on one side, and the other, which we learn from the Prime Minister's speeches, is that the measure of what we require in the way of an Army is the defence of the Indian frontier. I do not say that is the only purpose for which an Army will be required, but I understand the contention of the Government to be that if we have an Army suitable and large enough to defend the Indian frontier we may consider that we have an Army adequate for all the purposes for which we are likely to need an Army. Then, I ask, if that be so, how is it that the number of the Regular Army has been so much increased since 1898? What has happened since then to make a larger Army necessary for us? Three things have happened since 1898. One is that the Boer military power has been broken, and thereby, of course, a military danger has been removed. The second thing is that the Russian power has been greatly exhausted and weakened, which, of course, is the power that military men are thinking of when they discuss the defence of the Indian frontier. I am aware that, if the result of the war that is now going on is to place that part of the globe for ever outside any objective of Russia, we may assume that the Russian objective in future years will be more concentrated at some other point. I take that into account in saying that Russia has been weakened and is being weakened in the present war. But I think that my hon. friend the Member for Oldham is entirely justified in saying that although the Russian railways may have come closer to the Indian frontier than they were some years ago, yet with regard to the time it would take to reach the Indian frontier Russia is further off to-day than at any time. But the point is that the Government have come to the conclusion that we do not need to keep up a Regular Army for home defence. All these things point to a reduction of our Regular Army; and if our Regular Army is not to be greatly reduced, then it must be either because in 1898 we were keeping up an Army which was too small, or because the danger to the Indian frontier at that time was very much underestimated. I do not think the danger to the Indian frontier ever has been underestimated in this House.

I am assuming, of course, that when we talk about the defence of the Indian frontier we do not mean to embark on any forward policy. If we embark on the policy of extending our Indian frontier in order to meet Russia at a more distant point than our own base in Asia, then I think we shall be increasing our liabilities and decreasing our strength, and no doubt then we should have demands for a larger Army. I am assuming that it still remains the policy of the Government that we should not have a forward policy on the Indian frontier; that our policy should be one of defence, of making ourselves strong where we are, and of awaiting the attack, if attack ever be made. What I suppose the Committee of Defence is engaged in considering is what is the force of the attack that may possibly be made on the Indian frontier? Then you have to take into account not only the force you may possibly have to resist on the Indian frontier, but the time which it must, in any circumstances, take the Russian Government to place that force there. Until you have got this point satisfactorily settled, no doubt it is impossible to say what is the actual size at which our Regular Army should be maintained. I admit, if your policy on the Indian frontier is sound, if you make due allowance for the time it must take for any hostile force to be placed on that frontier, if you have thought out the problem with these limitations, then you must have a Regular Army and Reserves large enough to defend the Indian frontier from attack in the first instance.

The Secretary of State for War will tell us that we must not only have men to put the Indian frontier in a state of defence in the first instance, but we must have a large number of men to keep up our supply. I suppose he would wish to have a larger number of men who are liable in any circumstances for full service. Now here is my first departure from him in policy, and why I sympathise with the hon. Member for Tunbridge. I think in the question of Army reform the position of the Militia should have been reviewed, but it should have been reviewed in the opposite sense to which it has been reviewed by the Secretary of State for War. I should like to see the home-service Army placed on a Militia basis. As the hon. Member for Oldham says, you should assimilate the home-service Army to the Militia instead of assimilating the Militia to the Regular Army. You should make the Militia the foundation instead of making it the supplement—and much grudged supplement—of the home-service Army which you are thinking of establishing. You should give the Militia decent encouragement; but its position now is that of a force which is grudged by the Secretary of State for War, and of a force which, in no circumstances, is to be allowed to become too attractive, for fear that it should interfere with enlistment in the Regular Army. Until you assign a better place to the Militia in the Army scheme it is impossible for the Militia to become a really great and important foundation of our military strength.

Sir Edward Grey.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: How?

Sir EDWARD GREY: By enlarging it, by improving it, and by encouraging it.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: How?

Sir EDWARD GREY: I might say by treating it in the opposite way to which the Secretary of State for War proposes to treat it.

There is another matter to which I attach still more importance. If you prepare for a great war such as the defence of the Indian frontier would be, you will require, not a moderate number of men, but a large and indefinite number. You will no doubt require a moderate number of well trained men to give security at the outset. But after that in a really great war you will need a large and indefinite number of men to give the country staying power. You cannot provide these men by increasing the number of the Regular troops or Reserves or even Militia in time of peace. You can never in that way produce the number of men you will need in a great war. What we shall have to do if we are ever engaged in a great war is to rely on our Navy and our Regular Army as prepared in time of peace to give us security at the outset, and then, to give ourselves staying power, to manufacture soldiers as the war goes on. I believe that is what Japan has been doing in the present war, and doing with conspicuous success. How are we to get these large numbers in time of war and as quickly as possible? We can only get them out of the Volunteers. That is why I think that a fatal mistake in the present proposals of the Secretary of State for War is the limitation he proposes to put on the number of the Volunteers. Of all forces, the Volunteers are the one that should be left unlimited—they should be encouraged without limit. We have plenty of raw material in this country, only a comparatively small proportion of which we can make into trained soldiers in time of peace.

But when they are put to it in war much depends upon how far we have encouraged them to prepare themselves in time of peace by military training. Nothing should be neglected, not even the most elementary training. Above all, you should put no limit on the numbers who will engage in the process of elementary training.

Why does the Secretary of State for War embark on this fatal policy of limiting the Volunteers? Because, he says, they are rooted to the soil, and, therefore, he assumes that they will be of no use for service abroad. I agree that the Volunteers, having undertaken no liability to serve abroad, are rooted to the soil in the sense that they will never encourage this country to embark on military policy; they will not be anxious to engage in a great war for a small cause, nor will they desire that such conditions should arise as would cause them to be asked to volunteer for service abroad. But, in a national emergency, they would come forward, and, I believe, freely, for service anywhere. The Secretary of State for War relies on the experience of the South African War as an indication that you cannot rely on the Volunteers in large numbers coming to the help of the country by serving abroad. The analogy is entirely misleading. I do not think they had a fair chance. They were asked to volunteer when the war was said to be over. But, above and apart from that, you cannot compare the South African War with such a war as that on the Indian frontier. The country assumed, no doubt, throughout the South African War that in the long run we must have success; and I trust that when we are engaged in another war the conditions under which that war is waged —the conditions of unreadiness and want of preparation—will never be so discouraging on the part of our Government as they were then. But the South African War will be no test of the spirit of the country if we were engaged in a really national emergency in defending the Indian frontier, and what the Volunteers have done in the past is no measure of what they may do in the future. They have never been encouraged in the past, in the sense of being made to feel that the country would really depend upon them in time of stress. I think the Volunteers were regarded, certainly until recent years, as if they were a luxury, kept up and supported and encouraged by the Government to a certain limited extent, not for the sake of the country, but for their own sakes, because it was a healthy recreation for them to have a certain amount of military training. We have got a little beyond that now, because I think the Secretary of State for War does allot to them a really responsible position in his Army scheme, that of home defence. But if that home defence is to be a matter of five men in a dinghy, as described by my hon. friend, and we are to maintain 200,000 Volunteers, you cannot say that that is a very stimulating responsibility to lay upon them. They must feel more than that. The Volunteers, I think, must be made to feel that their system is a real system of national training, by means of which, if this country is ever attacked in a great war, either at home or abroad, the nation will be able to use all its resources and united energies for the defence of any part of the Empire.

What I think the Government ought to do is, without any limit of numbers, to concentrate their attention on physical development and the elementary training of as large numbers of the population as possible as Volunteers. A reasonable number of fully-trained men, as good as possible, we must have, no doubt; but to multiply those numbers of the Regular Army beyond a limited point is to do so at the expense of our staying power, at the expense of the Volunteers, and at the expense of our power of standing a strain in a really serious war. It is, I think, only by an encouragement of the Volunteers and by encouraging them in unlimited numbers, that we can prepare the nation for the strain of a really great war without laying upon it an intolerable annual burden of expenditure in time of peace. If you are going to limit your Volunteers you will, sooner or later, drift into conscription. The real alternative to conscription is unlimited encouragement of the Volunteers. We are reproached from abroad, sometimes, that our hatred of conscription, which I believe to be a thoroughly healthy spirit, shows a lack of public spirit. We are against conscription because, owing to our insular position and the strength of our Navy, we believe we can rely upon public spirit to undergo voluntarily some preparation, however elementary, in time of peace. I differ entirely from the Secretary of State as to the value of the Volunteers. I believe if we make the country feel that we rely upon them as an organisation on which we shall depend for our staying power in time of war, then, not only can we do without conscription, but, in a national emergency, if we appeal to the Volunteers in that spirit, the response will be adequate to any strain that may be put upon the country.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I always listen to the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman with interest and pleasure, and I thought that on this occasion I was going to have that pleasure added to, for I thought he was going to go a little further and adduce more constructive suggestions than he did, though I readily admit that it was not his duty to make those constructive suggestions to me.

I have heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman and that of the hon. Member for Oldham with interest, but, I am bound to say, not with that degree of instruction which I had hoped to obtain from them. I confess I am impenitent after hearing all that the hon. Member and the right hon. Gentleman opposite had to say. I venture to trust that the hon. Member for Oldham will not repeat his suggestion that I had promised large economies in the present year. I think I did quote, with perfect accuracy, on a previous occasion the actual words which I used. I said then, and I say again now, knowing what I knew last year and knowing what I know now, it would have been folly to have promised economies which I knew could not possibly be realised. I go back once more to the statement of fact that, as long as the House of Commons desires to have the whole of this great military paraphernalia kept up, they will have to pay for it. [An Hon. Member: Not all of it.] Let us realise what that negative means. We have been told over and over again by the right hon. Gentleman opposite that we are not to have any reduction of the Volunteer force.

Sir Edward Grey.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): The whole House.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): No.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Let us rule that out of the argument for the moment. We have been told, I think, with equal emphasis by the hon. Member for Tunbridge that we are to have no reduction of the Militia. Then it is perfectly obvious that if you are to have any reduction at all you are to have it on the Regular Army.

The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that I had proposed no reduction of the Regular Army. That, I think, was inexact. It is, in fact, very far from what I have proposed. I have proposed a reduction in the Regular Army; but I have proposed a reduction which is consistent with the conditions which the right hon. Gentleman himself laid down as being those which ought to guide any prudent Minister contemplating what this country may have to face. I quite recognise that there has been, owing to circumstances with which we have had nothing to do, a *détente* in the pressure in the Far East. I also recognise with the right hon. Gentleman, who is well acquainted with foreign difficulties of this kind, that we must not count too much upon the permanent character of that *détente*, because the withdrawal of responsibility and effort from one quarter may mean the concentration of responsibility and effort on another.

But I am prepared to take the view that that change ought to lead, and may reasonably lead, to a relaxation of the effort which we have hitherto been making. That is the view I have always taken. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to contemplate this problem as it presents itself to me—not, as some hon. Members appeared to think, after some hasty reconsideration of the pamphlets of a past age, but after a real endeavour to ascertain what are all the available facts that are open to me as a Minister.

I think I understood the hon. Member for Oldham to ask why have the War Office, or the Government, not found out before that the centre of gravity, so to speak, of our military structure now lies outside these islands? I think the answer is pretty plain. The whole science of defensive and offensive warfare at sea has been revolutionised. The Navy has been more than doubled in strength. I really find it difficult to argue these points with hon. Members who do not take into account the revolution in modern naval warfare; and when the hon. Member for Oldham speaks, not very definitely, but rather by way of suggestion or innuendo, in condemnation of the action of the Government in altering their policy with regard to the defence of London, I wonder if he really has taken into account what has happened with regard to the defence of this country at sea. I invite the hon. Member to go round that chain of fortifications outside London and to contemplate the arrangements that were made under different conditions for the defence of London. And then I invite him to transfer his activities to Portsmouth, to Chatham, or Sheerness, and see what has been put in the place of what has been abandoned. There has been a transformation of which only those who have followed it closely can have any conception. That is the reason why we have, without laying ourselves open to a charge of inconsistency, shifted the centre of gravity of our military edifice from this country to abroad.

The right hon. Gentleman says we are exaggerating the danger and the demands on the Indian frontier. That is not a question which I desire to discuss in any very great detail on this occasion, nor one that I think can with very great advantage be discussed in the House of Commons at all. But I would most emphatically say this, that the Government and the War Office are, in this matter, acting entirely in accordance with the advice and the recommendations and the demands of the Government of India. We are endeavouring to provide troops sufficient to meet the demands of the Government of India.

Two authorities have been impugned this afternoon. The Government are constantly made the object of criticism. But when we have criticism of equal certainty directed against, not only the Government of India and the military administration of India, but against the Committee of Defence, which, after all, is manned, in spite of some derogatory remarks which have been made, by very competent and experienced soldiers and sailors, I think we are entitled to pause and ask whether they are not at least as likely to be right as any individual critic in the House of Commons. We are endeavouring to provide for the demands of the Indian Government in time of war. We know what was the number of Regular troops sent abroad in the South African War. It is perfectly certain that we shall not want a smaller number to provide for a war in India if ever we should be so unfortunate as to be engaged in one. If it is not less, if we assume it is even the same, what shall we have to do? We shall have to provide a force infinitely in excess of that which we have ever provided on any single occasion in our history except that of the South African War. We shall have to provide a large force in the field who will be pitted against a regular well-trained European army. We shall not only have to put it in the field, but we shall have to reinforce it and keep it adequately supplied; and if there is one lesson which, to my mind, was more clearly taught than another by the mobilisation at the commencement of the last war it was this, that, in order to mobilise satisfactorily and with advantage, you must have an ample number of units and an ample Reserve.

I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to contradict me when I say that if you follow the policy adumbrated by the hon. Member for Oldham, and put the Army back on a seven and five years basis of enlistment—even keeping the whole of the units of the Army at their present numbers—you will have a Reserve entirely inadequate to the demands of war in India. If you carry out the only line of retrenchment which the House apparently, as represented in this Committee, would allow, if you begin to cut down the units of the Regular Army, not only will you have a Reserve enormously diminished and utterly inadequate to the needs of the Army, but you will have a number of units which will be still more inadequate, because the units are more important than the men. I would challenge any hon. or right hon. Gentleman who will go through these figures as I have gone through them to contradict that statement by any calculation he may choose to make. I have made the calculation over and over again, and I say the difficulty will be, not the enormous redundancy of units, but more probably that we shall be face to face with a deficiency of units when we are called upon to mobilise.

But the right hon. Gentleman said that you must reduce the Regular Army. That is exactly what I propose to do. I propose not to reduce units—I do not believe that is permissible—but to reduce upon the establishments and the cost of the existing units. That brings me to a remark made by the hon. Member for Oldham, and echoed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, which is very significant. He said you are following a wrong line in endeavouring to make the Regular Army the basis of your territorial Army; that you ought to make the Militia the basis of the territorial Army. As a general principle I do not quarrel with that statement. I think less divides us than some hon. Members would perhaps suppose. But I will give my reason as clearly as I can for not accepting that conclusion. If you accept it you are face to face with one of two alternatives. The question of cost will at once compel you to strike out of existence a large number of Line battalions. [OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear!"] I am with the hon. Member with regard to a limited number of those battalions on this condition—that you replace them by something as competent as that which you destroy. But if you are to keep the whole of the Regular battalions, not striking any out at all, you must put some of them on a lower establishment. Otherwise there is no diminution, and you at once have the Army Estimates up to £32,000,000 and £33,000,000. I desire to keep those battalions. I desire to maintain intact, for instance, the 93rd Highlanders; I desire to keep the whole of these historical battalions in existence. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about the fourteen Line battalions.] That does not refer to the fourteen Line battalions. I think it would be possible to reduce those battalions provided we were satisfied that fourteen other battalions as good could take their places.

MR. CHURCHILL: What is the object of the operation in that case?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The object of the operation is to give an opportunity to battalions with a longer history and greater traditions of taking their places in a territorial organisation which would enable a wider distribution of territorial battalions to be made than is compatible with a continuance of the support of the four battalion regiments. But if you keep up the whole of the Line battalions you must pay the extra cost or reduce some of them in number. It is an entire fallacy to suggest that by doing so you are inflicting any disability on officers or men in these battalions. This is what I want the Committee to understand—that in creating short-service battalions you are in no way interfering with the prestige or amenities of the existing battalions. That can only be alleged by those who are not acquainted with the condition of the Army. There are battalions which have been abroad ten, fifteen, and in some cases twenty years; there are battalions linked at home for the same period. There are battalions now in this country composed of 400 or 500 men, of whom five-sixths are short-service men, who do not go, and are not capable of going, outside this country at all. What difference is there, in the case of either officer or man, if he is in a battalion serving at home when he is unfit to go abroad and if he serves in a battalion abroad when he is fit to go abroad? It has been suggested that officers will select the long-service battalions in preference to the short. That is a misapprehension of any proposal made to the House. The proposal has been made that officers should do precisely what they do now—that they should be transferred from a battalion at home to a battalion abroad. But I seriously warn all my military friends that this is the only alternative to the destruction of the battalions themselves.

The hon. Member for Oldham—and his views are shared by others—thinks we might take the Militia as the entire material for our home Army.

MR. CHURCHILL: I did not say that. I am sure you will always need to have a very considerable body of Regular troops in this country.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I quite understand that. When I said home Army I meant short-service Army. It is obvious that we must get a Reserve in some shape or another. I understand it was rather the view of the hon. Member that we ought to have a short-service Army, composed of the Militia, to reinforce the Regular Army in time of war.

Now let us see what that really means in practice. We have 124 battalions of Militia. The Militia are now serving for three months on enlistment and receiving one month's annual training. It would take the ordinary Militiamen some fifteen years to get the amount of training which the soldier enlisted for two years gets during his period of service, to say nothing of training afterwards, when he is called out in the Reserve. Are we to take the Militia as they are to form the active Reserve of the Regular Army abroad? There is absolutely no conflict of military opinion on this question—the general view both in Europe and America is that you cannot put troops into the field against a Regular Army with training such as the Militia gets. The case of the Boers is cited. I do not believe there can be a more certain way of confusing counsel than to introduce misleading analogies of the kind which we have heard. I speak of the Militiaman as I know him. Let me give a single fact about the Militia. It is about 90,000 strong. 35,000 recruits go into the Militia in the year, and, of course, necessarily that number, and indeed more, go out.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): 15,000 go to the Army.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That only strengthens my contention. So transient is the condition of the Militia that 35,000 men go in in a single year and 35,000 men go out. The hon. Member for Lichfield reminds me that 15,000 of these men go into the Army. My right hon. friend spoke about improving the Militia and making them something different. I would give a great deal to know how that process is to be accomplished in any other way than I have suggested.

I have suggested that the Militia should be put on a basis which would be self-contained; that it should be regarded as a substantive force; that it should be capable of being used for service abroad; that a man entering the Militia should do his service in the Militia. Whether you call it home Army or Militia I care not. I do not think that proposition is vitiated by the fact that a man in the Lancashire Militia or the third battalion of a Lancashire regiment happens to have a comrade who is serving in a battalion which now exists in the Regular Army. Apart from that course, what course can be taken? When hon. Gentlemen speak about these things as if they had to do with counters and figures, I cannot help thinking it would be a good thing if they could see what happens in the depots. I will tell them what happens. I know depots all over the country where 50, 60, or 70 per cent. of the men go into the Militia simply for the purpose of passing into the Line and do pass into the Line. I know battalions where seven out of eight of the subaltern officers are serving in the Militia with the sole purpose of going into the Line. Hon. Members may say that is a mistake and very wrong, and ask for some encouragement and some system which will enable us to stop that flow from the Militia. Are you going to prevent Militiamen going into the Line? Put up that notice outside the regimental depot. You will not get recruits for the Militia. Give some additional inducement to the Militiaman that will keep him in the Militia. You will lose instantly 15,000 recruits per annum for the Line, and probably more — 20,000 recruits for the Line. Will any one get up and contest that? It is the inevitable result which must follow any treatment such as I have suggested.

Then we are told that we can by lengthening the training produce troops fit to take the field against a foreign army. Now is that a fact? What is the composition of the Militia? The boys are taken at seventeen. The other day I was analysing what would happen if you could take sixteen Militia battalions of the average strength of 800 apiece. I could not find them in any one district, but supposing I could, and supposing I had to send two divisions to India and had to deal with sixteen battalions of Militia. You would have to take out 5,400 men who are disqualified before the battalions start. That is out of sixteen battalions alone. That is not all. You cannot fill up the Militia battalions under the present system as you can the Line battalions. Every Line battalion leaves behind it, when it mobilises, a large number of men who are unfit for the field; but every month there are men coming on to qualify for service in the field in that battalion. That is not so in the Militia. When you eliminate the unfit men from the Militia battalion you have to wait one, two, three years before the men grow up to the modest age standard which we exact for the boys who are sent to India. No, I will submit this problem to as much cross-examination as the Committee chooses to apply to it, and I will abide by the result. I say you cannot, under the existing system, safely trust the fortunes of this country to the Militia, under their present organisation. I will ask the Committee, and the Militia Members of the Committee to meet me squarely and fairly on that point and tell me whether I am wrong I will ask them to produce to me some charm by which under the present system they can create a fighting force out of the Militia without injuring or almost destroying recruiting for the Line.

It is said that we may do a great deal by increasing the period of training. I think in this matter at any rate, we shall have to be guided a little by military experience; and I will ask any hon. Member to produce to me a military authority who will agree with the proposition that we can put into the field against a foreign enemy men with five or six months training. Do not let us be deceived by the proposition that the mere efflux of time will enable us to transform this material into really fighting material. All the great armies of the world are made up of men representing the manhood of the nations to which they belong; and if we analysed or examined the condition of our Militia battalions as they exist we should find that what was left in them, after they had furnished their quota of 60 or 70 per cent. of their strength to the Line, could not, even by the wildest stretch of imagination, be described as representing the manhood or the flower of this nation. I do not hesitate to say that there are Militia battalions which six months training, or a year or two years training, cannot so transmogrify or transform that they will become what they must become if they are to contend successfully with the flower of other nations.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Northumberland took a very strong view about the Volunteers, and I think that in that instance, though in that alone, he did me some little injustice. I am an advocate and a strong advocate, of the reduction of the establishment of Volunteers; but I do not think he need attribute to me all those sinister motives or want of comprehension of our military dangers which he did attribute to me. I have evidence before me, ample, complete, convincing, not from those misguided, uninformed persons the officers of the Regular Army, not from stubborn uninformed civilians like myself, but from Volunteer officers and officers attached to Volunteer battalions, evidence which is irrefutable, as to the condition of the Volunteer battalions. I quoted to the House only a night or two ago a statement made by a Volunteer officer that out of the 20,000 Volunteers who selected themselves and came forward in time of emergency for service in the field in South Africa—and I say all honour to them for so doing—33 per cent. were set aside as inefficient and incapable of serving. Now remember that that 33 per cent. has to be deducted not from the whole Volunteer force, but from the 20,000 men who had chosen themselves, presumably men free from all disability, to come forward and serve the country.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): From which district?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: From every part of the United Kingdom.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Is the right hon. Gentleman quite sure about his figures? The figures of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for 1901 do not bear them out.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No. I gather from the statements that I have before me that the figures are not strong enough. I think they are understated. Thirty-three per cent. of these selected men were unfit to take the field. Now, when you take the remainder, and calculate those who by age are disqualified, those whose occupations naturally prevent them from going out, those who have no inclination to go, and those who, not having presented themselves, are also physically unfit, I think you may see what an enormous reduction we must make from this force if we are to make it a real, vital contribution to the defence of the country. My hon. friend doubted my figures, but I have before me evidence a great deal stronger than that. Here is the evidence given by Major-General McKinnon himself. He was asked—

"Do you mean that of the men from the various battalions who came before you as being material to compose the C.I.V., 40 per cent. were not physically fit?"

and he replied—

"I mean that out of the number of Volunteers who were serving in the Home District in 1899 I do not think more than 60 per cent. were fit for service abroad; and I think that is, if anything, rather a high estimate."

Then there was Captain Jenner, of the King's Royal Rifles and adjutant 3rd London Volunteer Rifle Corps. He was asked—

"What percentage of your corps do you think should be weeded out—half?—No, I should not think quite half."
"A third?—Certainly a third I should think."

Then there was Colonel Mathias, commanding the 75th Regimental District at Aberdeen—but I ought not to quote him, because he is not a Volunteer officer. [Cries of "Quote."] Well, I will do so—

"We have had it put before us that in a good many cases, due to youth, and also to want of physical fitness, a large number of Volunteers would have to be weeded out if you wanted them to take the field?—Undoubtedly, in town corps."

Brigadier-Surgeon Lieutenant-Colonel A. Clark, senior medical officer of the 3rd London Volunteer Infantry Brigade, representing the Volunteer Medical Association, was asked—

"What sort of proportion do you suppose would crack up under these conditions (conditions of war)?—I daresay quite 40 per cent. would if you took all the Volunteers."

I quoted the other day a well-known Volunteer officer who said that if a proper medical inspection had been applied whole battalions would have been wiped out.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Oh.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Well, I am very sorry I cannot always please my hon. and gallant friend. I have quoted these figures in justification of my view that it cannot be any disadvantage to the Volunteer force or to the country to make a great consolidation of the force. The right hon. Gentleman said that that is the same proportion as in the Regular Army.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I said that if you reduced the numbers the same proportion of those who remained would probably be unfit—too young or too old.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: On the contrary; when you want to eliminate that class of recruits, in the first place you raise the standard, which we have done; and secondly, you eliminate those who, under a medical inspection, are found to be unfit. It is the fact that medical inspection is the rarest possible event after entry into the Volunteers.

*Mr. McCRAE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us some proof of that? In every Volunteer regiment I know each man must undergo a medical examination before he is enlisted.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): As officer commanding a Volunteer regiment I have every recruit inspected by the medical officer. He has to fulfil the standard requirements before I take him into the corps.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That is precisely my point. You get a very perfunctory examination in many cases, I am sorry to say. I am only stating what a multitude of witnesses have said; and they have said, if there is any meaning in their expressions at all, that so little value is this preliminary examination that when the forces are tested for the purposes of war you have to eliminate 30, 40, 50 per cent. of the men not of the whole force, but of the men who actually come forward and offer themselves.

Now is it a fair thing to say that I am moved by any destructive spirit or regardless of the welfare either of the Volunteers or the country when I say that we may with advantage make some consolidation, some concentration of the Volunteer force? No, Sir, I think that is nonsense. I am not at all influenced by the hostile feeling which I know my hon. friend the Member for Sheffield thinks I entertain; but I do find that many Volunteer officers do not merely not altogether see eye to eye with him, but tell me that I must not regard him in this matter as wholly representative of the entire Volunteer force.

I end where I began. [Cheers.] Yes, Sir, that is my point. I have not the slightest reason for altering the conclusion which I had already announced to the House; and my conclusion is this—that if you are to have an Army fit for the purposes of the only kind of war we are going to undertake you must provide that Army under the rules which govern all armies with regard to efficiency. You must make the men efficient. You must get the proper quality of men and give them a proper amount of training. It is not reasonable, when all is said and done, to keep up large bodies of troops in this country which are not by law available for war. It is no more profitable to keep up large bodies of troops in this country which, though nominally available for war, yet by reason of their physical incapacity or want of training cannot be produced in time of war. Lastly, I would say that if you are to have the economy which we all desire you will find it, I believe, only on the lines which I have indicated.

I have been told that I suggested no economies. I think that is rather an ungrateful remark, because if hon. Members would read the statement by which I prefaced the Estimates they would see that I have fulfilled to the letter the promise I gave that I would render it easier in future for economy to be effected. We are eliminating a large number of men from the Army, but you cannot get rid of them at once. We are replacing a large number of inefficient men by a smaller number of efficients. Broadly, you can only reduce the cost of the Army by reducing a portion of the Army to a lower establishment; and that is the final issue between hon. Members and myself. They are in favour of destroying a portion of the Regular Army and of relying instead on the Auxiliary Forces, without being willing to prepare those Auxiliary Forces in such a way as will enable them for all purposes to take the place of the troops of the Line. That is an opinion which I do not agree with, and which I have endeavoured to avoid in these proposals; and I wait for any serious proposal which will achieve the two results we all desire—maintenance of efficiency and economy—on other lines than those I have suggested.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the right hon. Gentleman at the beginning of his speech touched on subjects of such importance to the future of the country that he would make no apology for hardly naming those with which he dealt in his concluding remarks. The Volunteers played in connection with this whole question of the Army a somewhat disproportionate part in the House. The cost of the Volunteers was small compared with the cost of the Regular Army, and whatever solution might be come to on the particular problem of the Volunteers would not greatly affect the difficulties of the Army question. The only observation which he would make with regard to the Volunteers was in reference to the word "consolidation," which the Secretary of State for War had twice repeated. That was a word which had a history. When Mr. Disraeli was reproached with having abandoned the Turkish Empire, and allowed it to be reduced in strength and territory, he employed the term "consolidation." Turkey lost Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, the boundaries of Servia were extended, and Greece and Montenegro were enlarged, but Mr. Disraeli would never admit that the Turkish Empire had suffered anything but consolidation. The term "consolidation," when applied to the Volunteers, was used to represent a certain reduction in numbers. But he was not going to deal now with the question of the Volunteers.

When the Secretary of State for War, basing himself on the views of the blue-water school, which had now been adopted by the Cabinet, expressed doubt as to the wisdom of the comparatively small expenditure incurred on account of the Volunteers an inconsistency could be noted which they remarked also last year, namely, that more Government support was now to be given to rifle clubs which consisted of persons who were not under military discipline at all. That was inconsistent with the doctrine of the blue-water school. In regard to that doctrine he entirely agreed with the greater portion of the speech of his hon. friend the Member for Oldham. The Government, with the zeal of converts, had carried the doctrine of the blue-water school further than ever before; and when the Secretary for War said on Wednesday last that this was a mere reversion to the doctrine of the past, he must remember that in the days of Pitt, and of our naval supremacy, the Government encouraged the Volunteers and raised between 300,000 and 400,000 of them. But the reason why he wished to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War concerned the most grave matter treated in the earlier portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. This was a matter which they ought to discuss with a feeling that they were dealing with that which lay at the root of the whole military problem.

What struck him was a certain contradiction between the arguments which the right hon. Gentleman addressed to the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman said that as regarded India, he was prepared to allow, with the right hon. Member for the Berwick Division of Northumberland. that recent circumstances had justified some relaxation in the efforts which hitherto we had been making; and the Secretary for War went on to tell the Committee two things. One, which he twice repeated, was that we were to comply with the demands of the Government of India; and that was loudly cheered by the Secretary for India, who was not always so free in applauding the Secretary for War. And then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that we would not want in the case of any future war on the Indian frontier a less force than was sent out to South Africa, and that that force should consist wholly, or nearly wholly, of troops trained to meet a foreign enemy. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that the Government were prepared to face the country with a demand for sending to India 300,000 or 350,000 trained soldiers? Where were they to put them? Where were these trained soldiers to go to? Was the intention put before the Committee and the country a fear that some day a state of things would arise in India when a force of 300,000 to 350,000 men would be needed in that country itself to repulse an actual invasion? The Prime Minister last year rejected that idea; he said the problem was not the defence of India, but the defence of the frontier of Afghanistan. But no human creature imagined that any Power in the world could provide transport by which the deserts of Afghanistan could be crossed in such strength. That was agreed. And when the right hon. Gentleman talked of sending to India a force as large as was required in South Africa there must be something in the future —an imaginary state of things which had not come into our sight.

The Secretary for War justified all the demands that might be made on our Regular forces by the Indian Government. The Indian Government, like all Governments dealing with only one portion of the Empire, having exclusive regard to the needs of that particular portion of the Empire, made demands on the Home Government which the Home Government, taking into view the conditions of the Empire as a whole, was unable to accept. For generations the Indian Government had been pointing out to us that Afghanistan might be attacked; and that it was difficult to fulfil our obligations to Afghanistan if we had to contemplate counterstroke against Russia on the spot by a Regular force sent to Afghanistan. Were the Government contemplating a programme which no responsible soldier had said could be carried through successfully? It was not possible for this country to place upon the Russian frontier or in the neighbourhood of Herat a force superior to what Russia could bring. And he did not think that Russia would ever venture into such a hornet's nest, or if she did, this country would have a long time in which to prepare for action. When Indian soldiers had been seriously tackled on this subject; when the matter had been seriously discussed by competent persons, they had always admitted the impossibility of Russia crossing these deserts in the face of a hostile population unless she were accompanied by her railway, step by step. The suggestion of the Secretary for War that we should be prepared with a force larger than was sent to South Africa—a force of 300,000 or 350,000—for the defence of the Indian frontier was one which would not bear investigation for a single moment.

He agreed very closely to everything said on this subject by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Northumberland, except one single phrase. As he understood him, that right hon. Gentleman said that in India we must await attack. Now, he considered that that was to concede too much to those who argued against us on the other side, and admitted that we could not safely stand by and do nothing and see Afghanistan eaten up by Russia.

SIR EDWARD GREY said that the right hon. Baronet was now dealing with the outbreak of a war. He thought he was speaking of the difference between the forward policy and the maintenance of the *status quo* as a policy before the outbreak of the war.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he did not now think there was any difference between the right hon. Baronet and himself. He thought it would be a fatal thing to divide Afghanistan with Russia. Our safety lay in the transport difficulties. And in "unofficial war" or by alliances undoubtedly we should be compelled to resist Russia before she reached that point. No sane soldier would say that

Sir Charles Dilke.

we could cross these Afghan deserts in the strength which had been mentioned. This matter was of enormous importance, because the Government vouched the Indian difficulty as the sole reason for measuring the strength of the Regular Army. His right hon. friend the Member for Northumberland said that although it was not the sole demand, it was the measure of the demand; and if we were to comply with the demand of the Indian Government in this respect we thus met all other demands. The Government presented different and inconsistent arguments to the Committee. When any suggestion was raised that it was possible to make any reduction in the force of the Regular Army at home the Indian difficulty was presented; but when any scheme was presented to increase the availability of the Militia force then the Indian argument receded into the background. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War said that the Militia was a force not capable of being used against a European army in its present form; and the right hon. Gentleman disparaged the Swiss Militia army.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that what he had argued was that the Swiss army was not trained for foreign enterprises, but purely for home defence.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he did not wish to say anything in the way of disparagement of the Militia. It was of vast importance to this country that we should come as near as possible to an agreement with a view to the adoption of a well thought-out scheme. The Secretary for War—though he might not have intended to do it—seemed to disparage the Militia. The view on that side of the House was not uniform. He believed that the Militia in an improved form might be of great service abroad; but that an improved Militia should be barred from service in India was an admission he could not make. It had always been recognised that in the garrisons of the Indian stations a very large force could be liberated by troops not of the first order, and there were many on that side of the House who were prepared to support a scheme for improving the Militia not as a second string to the War Secretary's bow for service abroad, but as the main portion of his territorial Army. In these debates in relation to India, he thought that nothing should be said to weaken our diplomacy by showing alarm. He could not but think that some of the things said last year in the House and in the Press had led to a pessimistic treatment of the problem which was not required by the circumstances of the case. The Indian danger had not increased, for it was admitted by the Secretary of State for War that there was ground for some relaxation from the efforts we had been making on the subject.

He was very sorry to hear what had been said by an hon. Gentleman opposite in the military debate last week as to the defence of India being confided to the Asiatic troops of an ally. That was a suggestion which had been taken up by responsible and weighty organs in the Press. It was one which, having been made, should be repudiated. He had the greatest possible admiration for the magnificent courage displayed by the troops of the Japanese Army; and although he was opposed to permanent alliances, yet it must be admitted that the majority had either agreed in or acquiesced in the policy of an alliance with Japan. But in the peculiar problem we had to face in defence of India, for Heaven's sake, it should not go forth to the world that we were dependent upon an alliance with Japan. We should be dependent upon our own right arm, and India must be defended by ourselves. Pressure upon India was relaxing and was likely to be relaxed still more by the attack upon Russia by an allied country, and it was certain that no sane Government in Russia would run the enormous risk of plunging into a hornet's nest in Afghanistan for the chance of embarrassing us at so great a distance from her frontier. She would have to be prepared for any alliances that we might make, for a loss of credit entailed by such an operation, for the financial disaster which might be produced, and she would have to count in the future on the certain hostility of Afghanistan. Russia would have to count also upon our support of Afghanistan with money and officers, and it would be sheer lunacy on the part of the directors of Russian policy if Russia were led to attempt an attack upon India through Afghanistan. In any case it must be a slow action, needing years to accomplish.

No one could pretend that there was absolute agreement on both sides of the House among those who had given attention to this problem. He agreed with nine-tenths of what the hon. Member for Oldham had said, although he did not agree with him, that it was now possible to revert to the particular terms of military service which he had suggested in his speech. The clinging of many critics to what they called the Cardwell system was to be explained by the fact that it was a scientific and well thought-out policy. But it was now a humpty-dumpty, it had been knocked down and could not be set up again. The conditions had been changed by the South African War, by the rates of pay which had affected recruiting, and they had been essentially changed by the general recognition by the Government and the country of what might be called the doctrines of the blue-water school. On the other hand, it should be remembered that it was an essential position of the Cardwell plan to take the Militia completely into account. Lord Cardwell did so, and in the degree that this force had not been taken into account by the present military authorities they had departed from the Cardwell plan. The Secretary for War had developed in his speech the doctrines of the blue-water school to the ultimate degree, and it was a little hard upon those who were not very nimble in these matters that two years ago the Government should be scolding them because they held and enforced the same doctrines which the Government were now pushing almost to an extreme. Personally he had been a constant supporter of the blue-water view for many years, though he had never alleged that it followed they should reject such service as was obtained from the Volunteers at home. They ought to try to adopt in a higher or less degree the doctrine of the blue-water school, and he did not concur with those who desired to put in a saving clause against it. It was certainly curious that the Government had adopted the extreme view of that school within the last year or fifteen months, after having wasted enormous sums of public money on the opposite view during the last fifteen or twenty years. Indeed, the Government had adopted the blue-water view at the moment when a little doubt was being thrown upon it by the doctrines of scientific men. There was no doubt that ten years ago, when many of them were pressing the Government on this matter, the possibility of patrol of the Channel in time of war was much more complete than it would be in the future. There could be no doubt that for men who took great risks, the changes of the last few years had gone rather against the blue-water school view. He was, however, glad that the Government had adopted this view, although they had adopted it a little late in the day.

He said that he attached importance to the Militia, and to the Volunteers a more indirect importance, inasmuch as the Volunteer force encouraged the patriotic spirit in providing individual men who might be expected to volunteer in time of war. Although he would not undertake a vast expenditure upon the Volunteers, he thought that in that way they did make a return for the expenditure made upon them. With regard to the Militia, he believed they might be improved and made the basis of our home force. He confessed that he was unable to follow what was the state of mind of the Government on the Militia question. On February 21st, in the House of Lords, the Under-Secretary stated that no decision had been come to as to the future organisation of the Militia and that the question was still open. Two days afterwards the Secretary for War said his policy continued to be to ally a portion of the Regular Army with the Militia as the territorial Army of this country. The view that was generally taken on that side was not so much that the Militia should be so allied, but that they should make that force the basis of the home territorial Army. It was natural, at all events, that they should try to do so, since the Militia had those territorial associations which it was desired to create in the artificial scheme for the Home Army which had been evolved. The Secretary for War, in maintaining the view that only Regular troops should be considered as *cadres* for war, told them that no great Power would put into the field men trained for less than five or six months; yet undoubtedly that had been done by the Japanese in the present war in the Far East, and it was done by the Prussians in 1870. He fully admitted the importance of *esprit de corps* and territorial feeling in such cases, and he maintained that they would get a higher degree of that feeling in the Militia than in any newly created territorial battalions

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It was unfortunate that year after year Army Estimates were made which were provisional, Estimates which admittedly would involve us in large waste. For years past these provisional Estimates had been presented, and the expenditure had increased and the promises of reductions had not been kept. The Secretary of State now put his pledge of reductions a little less high than the Committee would be likely to put it. Last year he understood the Secretary of State for War to take up and reaffirm that promise of reduction; on the other hand, these provisional Estimates had involved large waste, which could not be and was not denied. The House was in this position—that it had no very definite scheme before it now, and that even if a change of Government took place, provisional Estimates would be introduced again next year, it being impossible for a fresh scheme to be prepared so soon. And yet there were being decided matters of policy which involved great changes in the Estimates, whether provisional or not, and marked the waste which had occurred. Some of those were matters which had been mentioned already; he would refer only to the change which the full adoption of the view of the blue-water school had made in regard to expenditure upon fortifications — bricks and mortar. Up to this year the country had been spending enormous sums of money upon garrison artillery and the protection of places by fortifications which were now to be forthwith abandoned. One reduction which the Government had decided upon, and the House of Commons as a whole accepted, was a large diminution of the garrison artillery. It was said that there were far too many garrison artillery. But the garrison artillery had been increased constantly within the last few years.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Who said there were far too many garrison artillery?

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said he understood the Secretary of State to say that he intended to reduce the Militia regiments of garrison artillery. Those Militia regiments had to be considered as equivalent to regiments of Regular garrison artillery, as they were used for the defence of fortresses.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER pointed out that the bulk of Regular garrison artillery were maintained for service abroad, while the Militia garrison artillery were solely for the purposes of defence at home. That was a very marked difference.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said a large amount of the reduction must apply to fortresses abroad, because the whole of the fortresses in the West Indies were being abandoned.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to say that that represented a very small reduction in numbers.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said that at any rate it was very large in expenditure. The Government had admitted that in military expenditure alone, under the Military Works Acts now running—and there had been enormous naval expenditure, as well as expenditure out of Votes—£400,000 had been spent upon four only of those stations within the last few years. At St. Lucia alone over £133,000 had been spent in the last three years out of Military Works Acts alone, and the Naval Expenditure at St. Lucia in the last few years had been over half a million sterling. The garrison was now withdrawn. This sudden change of policy was not one accompanied by a change of Government; it had been made under the auspices of the same Cabinet Committee of Defence, and the questions had been considered by the same joint body of the Army and the Navy, under the presidency of the same Prime Minister. The sudden change was a complete reversal of a system which had involved the country in enormous expenditure during the last three or four years.

Let the House consider how unsatisfactory was its position, and how provisional these Estimates were. At the time of the general election, during the war, it was universally admitted that the Army was in a most unsatisfactory condition; that view was confirmed by the Report of the War Commission, and by the admissions of two Secretaries of State for War and two Commanders-in-Chief. Revolutions were promised. A change was made, involving considerable cost. A second change followed. All the time the Estimates were wholly provisional. Since the last general election there had not been presented to the House Military Estimates containing anything that was not provisional, or anything in the nature of a complete and well thought-out system. Those who, like himself, agreed in many points with the Secretary of State for War, and who were prepared to give him the highest praise for the energy and ability of the attempt he had made to improve the system, were bound to admit that—whether the right hon. Gentleman had been thwarted by the Cabinet or the Army Council they did not know; whatever the difficulty had been, it was not the House of Commons—they were again faced with Estimates as provisional as were those of last year, and the Secretary of State now declared that in eight or nine months he would begin to take the steps necessary for getting a different system, which meant that the Estimates next year would also be provisional.

What had been the defence of the Government when their attention had been directed to these constant changes and the consequent waste. In another place a few days ago, when it was pointed out that enormous sums had been spent under the system now to be abandoned, the Under-Secretary of State for War said he—

> "Fancied it was part of a scheme of military and naval policy."

So that this large expenditure had been incurred right up to the present year upon a supposed military and naval policy, upon the very opposite of which the House was now asked to embark by the same Prime Minister and the same Committee of Defence. He had made these observations mainly because he felt certain that the arguments of the Secretary of State for War upon the Indian problem were the most important the Government were likely to adduce, that on them were based the requirements as to the number of men in the Regular Army, and that they would not bear investigation by the House. He hoped the Prime Minister would be pressed in the course of the debate to show how he reconciled the proposals now made with the arguments he adduced last year on the Indian problem. Personally he believed the Indian danger was enormously exaggerated on that occasion for the purposes of the debate, though he fully admitted that if they were to be guided only by the opinion of Indian experts and of the Commander-in-Chief in India they would always be asked for far more troops than it was possible or necessary for this country to provide. The question could not be decided by expert Indian opinion; it must be determined here on its merits. The Prime Minister must be asked to discuss the conditions of the problem and to show where was the suddenness of the need. He certainly preferred the admission of the Secretary of State to-day that there was a decrease in the urgency of that problem to the alarmist view put before the House last year by the Prime Minister.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that with regard to the Volunteers he agreed with the Secretary of State for War that it was absurd to obtain enormous numbers of men, a considerable proportion of whom were known to be efficient only on paper, and at the same time to starve the Volunteers in regard to matters which were admitted on all hands to be necessary to render them efficient as a fighting force. As to the statement that in the days of Pitt the Volunteer force was enormously strengthened, and that that was the time of our greatest naval supremacy, he pointed out that our naval supremacy was not reached until after the Battle of Trafalgar, when Pitt was almost on his deathbed. Invasion had been threatened all through Pitt's career, and it was owing to that threat that the Volunteers were so enormously increased.

With regard to the Indian danger, he thought the right hon. Baronet's view was far too optimistic. What Russia was doing in Manchuria was enormously more difficult than anything she would have to do if she attempted to invade India. In recent years Russia had made an enormous advance into Central Asia, and established herself there in immense strength. The "soft side" of Afghanistan could be invaded by Russia at any moment without any really serious opposition being possible on the part of the Afghans themselves. If an attack were made on India by Russia it was clear that an enormous number of troops would be required, both on the frontier and in India itself. 350,000 men might not be wanted all at once, but to keep up what would undoubtedly be a long and costly war great numbers of men would be required, and he agreed with the Secretary of State that that possible demand must be contemplated. The right hon. Gentleman's scheme was to provide an Army for service abroad, and by a short-service Army at home to turn into the Reserves numbers of really trained men, who would be available if any such demand arose. It would be impossible for us to await the attack on the Indian side of the passes into Afghanistan; a forward policy would have to be adopted, and the only way in which such an attack could be successfully met would be on the Candahar line. It should be remembered that India might be invaded also by the Persian route, and that in Persia Russia had obtained a predominant position. When all these things were taken into account he could not understand the attitude of the right hon. Baronet in looking upon the invasion of India by Russia as a dream and a delusion. He only hoped that no responsible Minister would ever take so optimistic a view; to do so would be to court the gravest disaster.

With regard to the Militia, he was one of those who believed that the original scheme put forward by the Secretary of State for War was the best. General Turner was often quoted as a great authority upon matters connected with the Volunteers and the Militia, and he had given it as his deliberate opinion, after studying the scheme put forward originally by the Secretary of State for War, that the sixty battalions to be constructed out of the Militia would be worth the whole of the existing force put together. He deplored the change and regretted that the original scheme had not been adopted. With regard to the improvements, if the Secretary of State's scheme was to be rejected then it was clear that, judging from the views that had been expressed by everyone who gave evidence on this question, the Militia must be improved. They were all agreed upon that point. He had never heard how the Militia was to be improved. The six months training, if that were adopted, would be sure to have a marked effect upon recruiting for the Militia. Were they going to get them to enlist for six months? He did not know where they would get the men, but if they did they would be setting up a competitive enlistment with the Line. He thought the first thing they should do was to make the Regular Army as efficient as possible, and not set up any competitive enlistment. If the Militia kept improving upon these lines, and could be got to come up for six months training, by all means let it be done, but he doubted whether it would be found possible to adopt that scheme.

He joined with the right hon. Gentleman opposite in congratulating the Secretary for War upon the many improvements he had made, and upon the many good ideas he had put forward in his various schemes. The Secretary of State for War seemed to be placed in the position of talking very much for himself, and they knew from his writings what his views were. He confessed, however, that he should be glad to know what were the views of the Prime Minister and the Government upon this important question.

*CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said the entire course of this debate went to prove that the Government had trifled in the most barefaced manner with this House and the country in the matter of Army reform. At the time of the South African War they were asked to have a little patience until the Government had got over some of the difficulties with which they were surrounded at that time. Some time elapsed, and then a scheme of Army reform was brought forward which provided for three Army Corps for service abroad and three Army Corps for the defence of this country. That scheme was thrown aside, and then the Government gladly adopted what had been called the blue-water theory. He belonged to the blue-water school, but not to the blue-water school run mad, which was what was being placed before the House at the present moment. They were told that there was no object in keeping any force in this country for the purposes of defence. He would like to ask the Prime Minister whether he meant that, in the event of there being any complications such as had been referred to in India or elsewhere, there was any guarantee that in the event of a portion of our Navy being employed convoying troops to India or elsewhere they could rely absolutely upon all the navies of Europe taking no advantage of the position in which this country would then be placed. The idea was ridiculous.

He wished to draw attention to what they were promised. He would like to ask would the present Government have been the Government of the country to-day if a few years ago they had told the people that at this period the Secretary of State for War would have brought forward Estimates not only as large but larger than ever they had been before in time of peace; and coupled with that they would have a reduction of the Army. The present Secretary of State for War a year ago published a Memorandum and what were the main points of it. Upon the very first page he said that his duty was to provide a remedy for the evils that existed; not a remedy for one, but for all the evils complained of, and for excessive expenditure as well. Had he carried out those proposals? The next thing he put before them in the same circular was the great desirability of providing employment for the men after they were discharged. The right hon. Gentleman said that one of the great difficulties of enlisting men for a long period of service was that of finding employment for them upon their discharge. He had told them that it was most desirable that every man enlisting for a long term of service should be practically certain of employment at the end of that term provided there was nothing against his character. The right hon. Gentleman also called their attention to the value of professional officers in time of war, and to the scarcity of junior officers.

What had he done to meet those requirements? In regard to junior officers he had met the difficulty by what he would venture to call the snobbery and jobbery methods of offering commissions in the Foot Guards and cavalry of the Line to any young men who happened to come forward without any educational test whatever, providing they had a certain yearly income. That was what he had laid down as being vital to achieve this reform in the Army. His proposals this year included a proposal to reduce the Army immediately by some 7,000 men, and at the close of the year to reduce it by no fewer than twenty battalions, or 17,000 men, which meant an economy of about £180,000 out of £29,000,000; and they had to submit to this paltry economy in order to be deprived of twenty battalions of the Regular Army. He told them that the Militia was practically useless unless it had longer training and a larger number of trained officers, but notwithstanding that he took the full amount of money in the Estimates; the right hon. Gentleman had made no provision for that longer training or for remedying the scarcity of officers. While showing by these Estimates that there was only a reduction of £180,000, he showed at the same time that we were short of quick-firing guns to such an extent that an adequate supply would not be forthcoming until the year 1908. He also showed in the same paragraph that the reserve of artillery was almost infinitesimal and was far below what it should be, namely, at least 20 per cent. The conclusion of the second Report would be utterly delightful and ridiculous if it were not so serious, for it wound up with an apology, showing that what he had led the House to expect last year they were not to have this year and that it was all in abeyance. They were to save a sum of £180,000 and spend £29,000,000 and this after the right hon. Gentleman had pledged himself to a substantial reform. He had told them that the following were to be held in abeyance:—The addition of Reserve officers, short-service battalions, the creation of nineteen additional territorial units, the territorialising of the short-service battalions, and even the creation of this much talked of striking force. In other words he told them that all he advocated last year and upon which the country to some extent must have relied was to be left in abeyance. He ventured to assert that if the right hon. Gentleman last year had told the House and the country that the Estimates for this year would be just as large as last year; that they would have 17,000 men less; and that coupled with this state of things they would be destitute of quick-firing guns and without a sufficient supply of the most modern rifles, and in fact be in a worse position than they had been in for the past ten years as a fighting force, he did not think the Government would have been occupying the Treasury Bench to-day.

The right hon. Gentleman began his speech some days ago by stating that complaint might be made that he was not going fast enough. Their complaint was that he was not going at all, and that he had not carried out any of the propositions which he laid down last year. He had done this in the face of the words he had just read, in which the right hon. Gentleman pledged himself to economy and stated that he would not stand at that box if he thought in any future year he would be obliged to bring forward such formidable Estimates. He used words to that effect, and he said the other day that he was not pledged to large expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman thought of a change in our military system, but what was that change? He had seen no change in the military system and he saw nothing he had done, with the exception of some very simple practical Departmental improvements. There had been some slight improvement in the Army Medical Department and in the Army Veterinary Department. He had handed over the aquatic defences of our ports to the Navy, and some fortresses to the Canadian Government, but outside these very small measures he saw no very broad change in our military policy. True, the right hon. Gentleman put changes before the country and led the people to believe that they were going to be carried out, but as for making any change in the military system, or any reduction of the Estimates worthy of the name, nothing of the kind had taken place.

The right hon. Gentleman said he had six Armies to deal with, and how had he dealt with them. The first was the British Army in India, and he would tell the House how the Army in India had been dealt with. He made no attack upon the Secretary of State for War in this matter, for he only regarded him as the mouthpiece of the present Government. The Government had succeeded in placing the British Army in India in the very worst position which it had ever occupied. Last year some 4,000 or 5,000 men went out as reliefs who were altogether unfitted for the task, for they were men who were physically unfit, and who in years were immature. At the present moment the class of men serving in the Army in India were constantly to the extent of 25 per cent. in hospital. He ventured to assert that in the event of that Army being required to be placed upon the Afghan frontier another 25 per cent. would certainly vanish before they could be placed in that position. That was what the Government had done for the British Army in India. As for the Home Army, the right hon. Gentleman had reduced it by 17,000. With reference to the Militia the result of his action was to injure that force most materially. [An Hon. Member: How?] He would give the hon. Member the words used by the Director-General of Recruiting, who knew something about this? He asserted that a large number of recruits joined the Militia solely with the intention of going into the Line; that this had done much to popularise the service, and that the process no doubt would continue.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: What have I done in the matter?

*Captain NORTON said he would tell the right hon. Gentleman if he would exercise a little patience. The right hon. Gentleman had held a sword over the Militia. He had told them that they were absolutely worthless. How could any commanding officer take an interest in his regiment if he was told that the Militia were absolutely useless and that they ought to be abolished? The Militia was really the very best recruiting ground we had for the Army. It was known that out of a strength of 90,000 they took some 35,000 recruits annually, and of these 15,000 passed into the Army. These men could never have been obtained for the Army if the Militia had not trained and fed them and given them time to mature.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: An enormous majority never go to the Militia at all.

*Captain NORTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell me that the Militia does not give to the Regular service 15,000 recruits annually?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, sir. The hon. Gentleman said that the Militia fed and trained them. A very large proportion never go into the Militia at all. They never see a Militia regiment or officer. They go straight into the Army from the depôt in thousands.

*Captain NORTON said he was well aware that a large proportion of men did not go into the Militia, but he maintained that a large number did go into that force. They served two or three years in the Militia, and, having attained a certain standard of physique, a very large number of men came from the various Militia regiments to the Line who otherwise could never be taken into the Line. Did the right hon. Gentleman deny that?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I know that in some cases 60 or 70 per cent. of the men enlisted for the Militia at the depot go straight into the Line.

*Captain NORTON said he did not deny that a large proportion went direct, but having some knowledge of this matter he maintained that a large number of the men year by year passed out of the Militia into the Line after one, two, or three years service. He had not the slightest doubt on that matter.

As to the Volunteers he thought the Committee, as a whole, were undoubtedly not in favour of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals to reduce the Volunteer force, because it was the only school of arms we possessed. The Report of the Director of Auxiliary Forces clearly proved that the Volunteers, even though they might contain a large number of men who were not up to the requisite standard, did tend to foster the military spirit of the country and enabled us to get a greater proportion of recruits than we should otherwise obtain.

The right hon. Gentleman had asked if anyone would sweep away any portion of his work. This Government had never attempted to attack the real question. After all, the real question which lay at the basis of Army reform was the question of recruiting and providing the men. That was the difficulty that had confronted us in the South African War and in the Crimean War. That was the difficulty with which we, not having conscription, had always had to deal. How had it been dealt with? One good thing had been done in this direction, namely, that the men had been obliged to furnish certificates of character before being taken into the service. The Inspector-General of Recruiting stated that there was unanimity of opinion that this had resulted in raising the tone of the Army and popularising it with the better class of the population. What had taken place? False characters were produced by the thousand and the recruiting authorities had brought this to the knowledge of the Government. A Bill had been prepared in order that the danger and difficulty in regard to characters might be dealt with. But the Government last session were too much engaged in desiring to jump on Russian Jews, who took refuge in this country, to pass that measure through the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the recruiting of the Foot Guards was satisfactory. The Report of the Inspector-General said it was unsatisfactory. Moreover, the more they departed from the proposal to take nine-years men, and the more they reverted to the original proposal of taking three-years men, the greater difficulty there would be in the recruiting of the Guards. The present infantry had been kept up to strength mainly because other branches of the service, owing to the South African War, were above their strength, and because the labour market being in a bad state, the unfortunate man, who from starvation was obliged to enlist, had no option but to enlist in the infantry of the Line.

The question of civilian employment was a thing which the right hon. Gentleman pledged himself in his circular to attend to. The right hon. Gentleman said it was a matter of supreme importance. The report of the Inspector-General said—

> "In connection with this subject it will be observed that only nine appointments have been filled during the year in Government offices outside the War Office."

That showed a material diminution in the number of ex-soldiers employed in Departments under the Government. He was well aware that a certain number of men were employed in the Post Office. He exonerated the authorities for not taking a large number of ex-soldiers in the Post Office for the reason that the duties had become highly technical and that it was not possible to employ them very much except in the position of auxiliary postmen.

Referring to what had recently been done with regard to the Highland Light Infantry the hon. Member said he had often heard the Secretary of State for War lay stress on prestige, bands, banners, and uniforms, and yet the Government went out of its way to flout the traditions of that part of the country which had furnished some of the finest soldiers who ever shouldered a rifle, and to insult the sentiment of the people by dissociating the Highland Light Infantry from the rest of the Highland Brigade.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said there had been no change whatever proposed in the Highland Light Infantry.

*CAPTAIN NORTON said his point was that the Highland Light Infantry had been permanently grouped with other regiments to which they were not allied.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that the hon. Member was under an entire misapprehension, The Highland Light Infantry were associated for administrative purposes with other infantry regiments in the Lowlands, but they were not now brigaded with Lowland regiments.

*Captain NORTON said that as far as his information went, this peculiarly Highland regiment was being grouped with Lowlanders; that it was contrary to their sentiment, and would do damage in the future to recruiting. The right hon. Gentleman said that he was leaving a soft place for his successor; but he agreed with the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean that, so far from its being a soft place, it would be one of exceeding difficulty. What the Committee had a right to demand was that something should be done, and that the promises the right hon. Gentleman made a year ago to this House and the country should be carried out. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that when he came into office he found that the Army was a danger to the State and that the Estimates were excessive. What had he done to make the Army a less danger to the State, or to introduce economies in Army expenditure?

*Colonel WELBY (Taunton) said that when the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War brought in his scheme last year he wished it every success; although he could not see the application of it to the military possibilities of this country. Since then, however, there had been a very great change in the policy of the Government. In reply to Questions, and in speeches in the House, the Government had shown that they had adopted the blue-water school theory in its entirety. He did not himself see how the blue-water theory was compatible with what he regarded as the principal part of the scheme of last year—that was, the separation of the Regular Army into two parts: one for foreign service and the other for home service. If they adopted the blue-water theory they no longer wanted troops for the defence of this country. He disagreed with the blue-water theory in its extreme form, because, carried out to its logical conclusion, they did not even want Volunteers. He believed that that would be a great misfortune, for the Volunteers had been an exceedingly useful recruiting ground, as was shown in the late war, and it was probable that in future, in the event of war, there would be a still greater response from the Volunteers. In addition to that, it appeared to him that the Volunteers encouraged the military spirit in this country; they brought out the fighting spirit of the race, and had co-ordinated and organised it. It was that military spirit which had carried us through recent campaigns. The country was fond of going to sleep over military matters and then waking with a start; Volunteers were a valuable protection against recurrent panics. If there was not a strong and sufficient force for home defence when we were engaged in a war with a foreign nation, our Fleet would be constantly on guard round our shores; and everyone who had studied naval strategy knew that it was sometimes necessary to concentrate the Fleet at a particular point to strike some important blow. The theory of a raid by 5,000 men was a mere theory and might be upset, as nothing happened so often in warfare as the unexpected.

The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War gave two reasons for adopting the theory of the blue-water school. The first was that the Navy was nearly double the strength of a few years ago, which was a weighty reason, and the second was that the whole of sea warfare had been revolutionised during the present campaign in the Far East. But what had occurred in the campaign in the Far East tended to show the uncertainty of naval defence. He had recently spoken to a naval officer of high rank and had asked whether that gentleman thought our Navy could have done better than the Japanese Navy in the present war, and his reply was—

> "I believe they would have done as well, but they would have lost more ships because they are bolder and have more ships than the Japanese, and can therefore more easily risk losses of ships than the Japanese can."

All these things pointed to the fact that sea warfare had become more difficult than it had been in the past. There was more danger in the future that some disaster would overtake the ships guarding our shores, and such a thing might throw open the waterway, if not for more than two or three days, sufficiently long for a strong force to be passed over from some Continental country, in which case there would be an invasion of this country, perhaps by many more than 5,000 men.

This uncertainty as to military affairs was not only unsatisfactory to the House of Commons, but it must be a great difficulty to the Army Council. A change of Minister there or of the Ministry might result in the policy which was now adumbrated being entirely changed. How, then, could the Army Council throw their heart into their work at the present time when they did not know what policy would be required of them in the future. Everything pointed to the fact that this question ought to be lifted out of the range of Party politics, and that a scheme ought to be arrived at between the two great Parties in the State which should be lasting in its character.

Much had been said about the shrinkage of the Volunteers. Now no one who had the welfare of the Volunteers at heart would for a moment regret that reasonable conditions as to physique and training should be imposed in order to make the force efficient for modern warfare. Every soldier felt that the more efficient a force was, even though it shrank in numbers, the more valuable it became. But it was a mistake to announce that the Volunteer force was going to be reduced by so many thousands of men. The great difficulty with regard to the Volunteers defending this country lay in the stiffening of that force, in the backbone of it. The right hon. Gentleman said that its backbone was the Home Army, but nobody knew whether the Home Army would be here or whether it would be ordered abroad. What was required was to go thoroughly into the system of our Army, to take the numbers as we could get them and set to work to organise them, and when that was done and they were fitted for the requirements of modern warfare any deficiencies of the scheme should be boldly put before the House and country in order that they might see whether anything could be done to improve it. He thought it would then be found that the Home Army would require stiffening. In early days our Army had not to repel invasion, but to serve in the wars against France. There were then two ways of raising an Army, one was by means of contractors, which we should never adopt now though we had contractors for almost everything, and the other system was by an apportionment of men to the different counties and towns of this country. He could not see why a force of 100,000 men should not be raised by an apportionment of men from every county and town. If a town or a county could not find the men required of them then a fine of, say, £100 per man might be inflicted on them, so that the Government could find a man elsewhere. But whatever the force might be it should be thoroughly trained. A man should be trained for two or three years, when he should pass into the Reserve. He should be resident in his own county or the military district to which he belonged. He could then be called out like an ordinary Reservist, but he should be paid an amount sufficient to enable him to live in the district, or he might be employed by the county or the town to which he belonged. By such a system as that there would be no difficulty in retaining the voluntary character of the Army, and a force would be obtained for home defence sufficiently strong to enable the Navy to feel that they could be spared from these shores for days, if necessary.

Colonel Welby.

With regard to the shortage of officers, which was stated to be one of our pressing needs, the right hon. and gallant Member for Shropshire said one of the difficulties in procuring officers was the size of the College at Sandhurst, and that in time could be overcome. He understood that the two years course had now been reduced to one, but he hoped in that one they would not attempt to cram in all the book knowledge that should be acquired in two. He had known many cases of young officers who had joined his regiment who were book stale, and the consequence was they would never look at a book until they had to prepare for another examination. As regarded the cavalry, the right hon. Gentleman had done a great deal to reduce the expenses in certain directions, but he was afraid that in many cases the expenses had gone up. The fact was that the standard of life all round had risen. But there was one direction in which he thought a considerable diminution in cavalry expenses might be effected. It was an unpopular thing to suggest, but he thought military polo tournaments were a source of very great expense. It was only necessary to think of the price of polo ponies to realise what an item polo must represent to cavalry officers. In regard to the Foot Guards, it was often forgotten that the officers used to have long periods of leave really as part of their pay. It was impossible for a subaltern in London to live on his regimental pay. Many men with private means used to go into the Foot Guards, and used their terms of leave to manage their own private estates. It might be argued that such men were not wanted in the Army, but no regiments ever fought better than the Foot Guards officered by these men, and he thought it might seriously be considered whether men having private responsibilities at home could not be granted longer leave. Another matter was as to the stations at which regiments were stationed. The fact of having four battalions of Foot Guards permanently at Aldershot might affect the class of officers who joined the regiments. Why should not the old system have been kept up, under which the Guards were stationed at London, Windsor, and Dublin? It would probably benefit recruiting if a battalion of the Foot Guards were quartered in Edinburgh. At any rate the system of quartering a number of battalions away from the Metropolis and the cities specially identified with the Sovereign was worthy of consideration. As regards the Militia it seemed to him a question of pay or position; if they could not restore the force to the place it held 100 years ago in public estimation, when young men sought it for position, they must increase the pay. As regards Volunteers, he hoped they would arrange so that all cost of equipment and training should be borne by the State and not by the officers, so that whatever pay an officer received it should be a real emolument, and that he should not receive 5s. and perhaps pay out £1.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that if, as the right hon. Gentleman had stated, the Militia were of such poor physique that it was impossible to send them abroad, he would like to know for what purpose the Militia Bill, making service abroad compulsory, was to be introduced. As to the Indian question, there had been a failure to point out that in every case the pretensions of Russia as to her strength at this or that particular point had been a long way in advance of the facts of the case. In Manchuria the Russian battalions were exaggerated by the Russian Press to double their actual size and much of the success of the Japanese had been due to the fact that they had not allowed themselves to be bluffed by the assertions of the Russian Press. In the same way he thought that if we allowed ourselves to be frightened by the bug-bear of Russian strength on the Indian frontier, we might have to make preparations for which there was no real necessity.

The right hon. Gentleman had declared that what had been said in this debate was moderate and fair in tone, and he trusted that he would not say anything which would depart in any way from that standard of moderation and fairness. He wished, however, to point out that the question of expense, so far as it had been brought to their notice in the Estimates, and in the Memorandum which accompanied the Estimates, had not been debated as closely as it might have been. The proposal before the House was to reduce the Estimates by £1,000,000. The Secretary of State for War had declared that the present Estimates were abnormal. He said there were special items and peculiar circumstances which made this year an impossible one to have a normal Estimate. What were those special items and those peculiar circumstances? As had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Oldham, the Secretary of State for War had had the advantage of an enormous accretion of appropriations-in-aid which he could never hope to get in subsequent years. Those appropriations took off his shoulders the greater part of the burden laid upon him by the cost of the new guns. The special items to which he referred were not special in anything but name. He remembered that on the first page of the Memorandum he used the word "special" eight times. It was almost as frequent as the use of the first person singular. He confessed that he had been unable to detect any items which were really special. The right hon. Gentleman said that the cost of guns and harness was special, and that no part of this expenditure ought, in his opinion, to be brought into the charge for this year. He seemed to forget that harness and guns were liable to a good deal of injury by wear, and therefore he ought to have added something to meet this depreciation. Then he ruled out of account as a special item all the expenditure in connection with loans. Why? The loans had increased in past years, they had increased this year, and they must increase in the future.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER dissented.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the right hon. Gentleman shook his head, but this year he was going to spend a large sum of money upon Salisbury Plain and £3,370,000 upon loans. He was aware that he had got £6,500,000 unexpended out of the barracks and permanent works loan which was going to be expended in the future. The sinking fund for the loans would not diminish, but increase, and there was a possibility of the sum which should be devoted to the sinking fund being still further reduced. What would happen if all these sums were included? They ought to include a sinking fund charge for the artillery and a larger sum for the repayment of loans; and they also ought to include a large sum in consequence of these extraordinary appropriations-in-aid. If they did this the consequence would be that the nominal decrease would not be a decrease at all, but an increase of the normal expenditure, unless the whole system was changed, and this increase would be nearly £500,000.

The right hon. Gentleman had said that the only way to reduce expenditure was to reduce the numbers, but he could not agree with that argument. They might have saved £10,000 upon clothing, and £10,000 upon ranges which had been first built and afterwards abandoned as useless. They might also have saved this year a very considerable sum in moving half a battalion of troops from Malta to Egypt, because, first of all, they reduced the establishment of troops in that country below the establishment which ought to have been maintained. In this particular case the establishment fell below the proper numbers, and to make it up they had to send out units to make good the requirements of the Egyptian Government. Those were instances which with better administration would have diminished expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that a large number of the men were useless for the purpose for which they had been enlisted, and the whole of the remedies he had promised last year, with one exception, remained unfulfilled. The right hon. Gentleman on the 11th of December last said—

> "If my scheme is in abeyance I will not remain an hour in my present position, but my hopes are as bright as ever."

What did he now say in this Memorandum. He said that those parts of last year's proposals which were dependent upon the creation of short-service battalions must necessarily be in abeyance. It seemed to him that there was a most extraordinary coincidence in this. The Secretary of State for War in speech and in writing had twice used the word "abeyance." He said he would resign if these reforms remained in abeyance, and then he went on to point out that the whole of his scheme was practically in abeyance. What were the essential parts of his scheme? He would take them from the Memorandum itself. He said the short service battalions were essential to his scheme and they were in abeyance. He said they must have an addition of Reserve officers; that was also in abeyance. He also said that they must create nineteen additional battalions and that proposal was left in abeyance. And lastly, he declared that there must be a territorialising of the short-service battalions and the creation of a striking force, and both those proposals were in abeyance. What part of this scheme was it which was not in abeyance? He confessed that he found it impossible to give an answer to that, and he believed the right hon. Gentleman could not answer it across the floor of the House. They might be told that the long-service enlistment was not in abeyance, but that, and that only, was the one part of his scheme which had been realised, and this had only come about in order to make good a deficiency with which the right hon. Gentleman had nothing to do, and for which he was in no way responsible. He did not want to press the right hon. Gentleman too hardly to make good his undertaking and fulfil his promises to the House, but they were told the other night by the Colonial Secretary that men of honour redeemed their bond. The Secretary of State for War gave them his pledge a year ago, and six months ago, to do certain things if certain hopes which he held were not fulfilled. Those hopes were not fulfilled, and the Army, from his point of view, was so much the worse in consequence; and therefore, they had a right to ask him to redeem his promises, and if he did not do so the only person to whom they could go for a fit and proper definition of his conduct was the Colonial Secretary, and they must in future treat the right hon. Gentleman as a person who had been dismissed from serious calculations with regard to statements of this kind. But there were other things quite apart from the personal conduct of the right hon. Gentleman which were more important, because when the right hon. Gentleman had gone they would abide.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS) BILL [By Order].

*Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said he rose to move the Instruction standing in his name, which was to omit from the London County Council's Bill that portion of the tramways which started east of Westminster Bridge, traversed Westminster Bridge and the Embankment, and then crossed over Blackfriars Bridge. He expressed his regret at having to speak again on this well-worn subject, but made no apology for so doing because that apology should come not from him but from those who continued to propose these Bills. He and those who supported him only asked the House to reaffirm a decision at which they had arrived on more than one previous occasion, whilst those who opposed the Instruction asked the House to cancel the vote it had previously given. In 1892 and 1898 similar Bills promoted by the London County Council were rejected by the House of Commons, and in the present Parliament in 1903 and 1904 similar proposals were rejected by majorities of twenty-eight and thirty-eight. On this occasion no new facts had come before the House to cause it to reconsider its previous decisions. He based his appeal to the House to reject the proposals of the London County Council on the considered Report of a Joint Committee which sat to consider the question of London traffic in 1891, and which reported that a street tramway was not the best way of dealing with this problem, the solution of which was to be found in shallow under-street tramways and in tube railways. He and those who thought with him also attached considerable importance to the fact that subsequent to that time different railway companies had taken powers to construct tubes to connect up different parts of London.

He repudiated the suggestion that those who opposed this Bill were opposed to easy, cheap, and direct means of communication between the industrial population of the South and the industrial population of the North of London. It was because, in his opinion, this Bill would not have that effect that he opposed it. At this moment a tube railway was approaching completion which would commence at Waterloo, close to the Elephant and Castle, and run thence to Charing Cross and northwards to Baker Street. In addition, there was a tube in course of construction running between Charing Cross and King's Cross, whilst there was a railway in operation running from the South of

London through Blackfriars northwards. Together these railways would give the industrial population very cheap, direct, and quick communication between various parts of London. A similar Bill was rejected last year on the grounds that the Traffic Commission appointed at the instigation of hon. Gentlemen opposite to consider the question of London traffic had not reported. That Commission had not reported up to this time, and that being so how could the House sanction the construction of these tramways before they knew the deliberate and considered view of that Commission. He did not think any hon. Gentleman who consulted a map of London would say that the best means of bringing the industrial population of the South into communication with the industrial population of the North of London was by a tramway over Westminster Bridge and down the Embankment to Blackfriars Bridge. Surely the best way would be by a tube under the Thames or a tramway over a bridge less distant from the working-class population than Westminster.

He appealed also to the artistic sense of the House. London was gradually becoming a city of beauty and the centre of its beauty must always lie, from historic and artistic causes, largely in the region between the towers of Westminster and the dome of St. Paul's. Through that region ran our great river in so devious a course that it was impossible to obtain direct arterial communication along its banks. By a curious accident that much derided body the Metropolitan Board of Works built on the side of the river a worthy Embankment; while the action of that House had lined the Embankment with gardens of much charm. If one place was to be picked out in any part of London into which should not be thrust unnecessarily an alien stream of continuous and heavy traffic it would be this region. He therefore appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite who had a proper sense of the dignity of Central London to join with him in saying that until proof had been given that it was absolutely necessary that this alien traffic should go on to the Embankment they would oppose the Bill. He begged to move.

*SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham), in seconding the Instruction, said he did not propose to base his arguments for opposing the London County Council's Bill upon artistic, but upon practical grounds. There was no violent hurry for this measure. We had gone along for many years without having a tramway on the Embankment, and before such a work was proceeded with it was only commonsense to allow the Royal Commission, which had been sitting now for two years, and which would in all probability deliver its Report in a few months, to report. The only conclusion he could come to as to the reason for this Bill being pressed was that hon. Gentlemen opposite were afraid that the Report of the Commission would not be favourable to them. There was no great demand for these trams down the Embankment. There had not been any omnibus traffic on the Embankment for the last thirty years. In two or three months we were going to have a line of steamers on the river upon which the London County Council were going to spend £350,000, and now they proposed to spend a large sum of money in laying down a line of trams on the Embankment to compete with their own steamers. At the same time there was a railway under the Embankment which would shortly be electrified. It was not a project which business men would undertake, and he could only assume that the London County Council, having the ratepayers behind them, and without considering to what extent they were spending the ratepayers' money, having been beaten for the last ten or twelve years had determined to bring this Bill in every year. This was a different Bill to that brought in in the previous year. That did not propose to run down the whole of the Embankment but to stop at the Savoy, and it might be argued that it would meet the tramway running underground from the Savoy to Holborn, but, even so, that tramway was not completed and there was no hurry on that score. There was no omnibus traffic down the Embankment and had not been for thirty years, and though there might be a certain amount of traffic over the bridge it only meant that those who now got off the tram on the south side of the bridge would get off on the north side;

they would not be able to continue their journey any further practically than they could at present.

The police evidence before the Royal Commission was very strong; they pointed out that if the trams were carried over Blackfriars Bridge into the City the congestion of traffic would be so great that it would be impossible to carry the traffic on. With regard to the congestion of traffic, he pointed out that a tram could not deviate from the fixed line, and that if it broke down congestion was at once caused. Then people who wanted to ride on a tram had to go into the middle of the road, which again necessitated a stoppage of the traffic. Then the laying down of a tramway took a considerable time, during which the road was impassable and everyone was put to inconvenience. If they were to allow the tramway to pass over the bridge the whole of the roadway would be taken up in order to put down the line. Let anybody who wished to go to Liverpool Street from the House consider what that would mean and what the state of the road would be for the next six months. He had always said and believed that if the Royal Commission reported in favour of such a scheme as this all opposition would cease. In his opinion that, in itself, was a very strong argument in favour of the instruction.

Before he sat down he wanted to make a small personal statement. In opposing these tramway schemes he had no personal object to gain of any sort or kind. He had been represented in the *Star* as driving down the Embankment in a fur coat in a motor-car; he could only say he never had a fur coat and never owned a motor-car. When he travelled down the Embankment he was usually on the Underground Railway or on foot, though he sometimes drove his own horse. He believed the line when made would not be used, that it would cost a great deal of money, that it would create congestion, that it was quite unnecessary, and that the agitation in its favour had only been got up for a political purpose.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the London County Council (Tramways) Bill to omit Tramway No. 1, Tramway No. 1a, Tramway No. 2, and Tramway No. 2a."—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said he seldom troubled the House by making a speech, but as he had the honour to represent a South London constituency much interested in this matter he desired to make an urgent appeal to hon. Members to reject this Instruction and to pass the Bill. The proposal before the House was somewhat different to that which had been rejected in the previous year, because this included the crossing of Blackfriars Bridge, which was not included in the other Bill. He contended that at this time of driving competition London could not be turned into a pure pleasure and playground. The Embankment was built with the money of the ratepayers of London as a whole, and the ratepayers as a whole had a right to look upon the Thames Embankment as a road to be used for the benefit of the public at large. It was not constructed for the benefit of those of the North alone. He agreed with the hon. Member in saying he would like to see the Thames Embankment left the picturesque thoroughfare it was from the artistic point of view, but this House could not make London a beautiful place without regard to its commercial wants. The Embankment, it must be remembered, was not built with the money of private individuals for their own special luxury. The hon. Member had spoken of tubes, and had also stated that the London County Council were providing steamboats and now wanted to compete with them by means of these electric trams. Such a suggestion was absolutely absurd. The necessity for this Bill was shown by the fact that in four hours in the afternoon 930 persons went over Blackfriars Bridge in omnibuses and found the trams on the other side, and that in the same period no less than 30,000 found their way across the bridge to the trams on the south side. It must be remembered that those 30,000 people who went home in the evening came back in the morning to their work. All that was asked by the Bill was that there should be a continuation of those trams over the bridge and down the Embankment. They would do no harm to the omnibuses or motor omnibuses which had been referred to.

The proposal was a very simple one and he hoped it would receive the support of the House.

An objection which had been raised to the Bill in times gone by had been that a Royal Commission was sitting. He looked upon a Royal Commission sitting as a blocking notice to any sort of measure of reform or matter of progress brought before the House. Reference was made in the petition in favour of the Bill to the necessity for a continuous route. All the South London boroughs had petitioned in favour of the Bill with the exception of Bermondsey, and several town's meetings presided over by the mayors of the respective boroughs had been held at which resolutions were passed unanimously in support of it. The hon. Member for East Islington who opposed the Bill last year was now prepared to waive his objection. There were very few persons who as frontagers had a right to oppose this measure. He thought that as a matter of fact the frontagers on the Thames Embankment would be greatly benefited by the proposed tramway, because it would afford great accommodation to everybody who wishe to go to the West End. The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons objected to the tramway because of the noise which would be caused, but he wished to know if they preferred the noise of a motor omnibus to that of a comparatively quiet tramcar. He hoped the House would look at this question from a practical business point of view, and not merely as though the Embankment were only a place of ornament. The ratepayers were entitled to the use of the Embankment, and he asked the House to allow the Bill to go to a Committee, where the details could be fully considered.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.) said that he intended to vote against the Instruction, notwithstanding the fact that he had voted in its favour on a previous occasion. He had never opposed the tramways on the Embankment because he thought that they would be ugly; on the contrary, he thought that they would be attractive looking. But he was not willing any longer to be influenced by the only consideration which prevented his supporting the tramways in past years—namely, the long-promised Report of the London Traffic Commission. He did not believe that Report when it did appear would bring absolute salvation to the London people. The Commission had been listening to some exceedingly interesting evidence, and it seemed to him that that evidence had so fogged their minds that they were unable to present a Report with the conclusions at which they had arrived. He thought the argument with respect to motor omnibuses which had been advanced was the most slender that could be brought against the proposed tramway. Were they going along the Embankment when no other omnibuses had ever attempted to carry traffic there? The ordinary omnibuses had hitherto avoided that thoroughfare. In this matter they should rely not so much on prejudice as upon reason and argument. It seemed to him that the Thames Embankment was of all thoroughfares most adapted for a tramway to be laid down, and to prohibit it was to pursue a course which was neither intelligible nor intelligent.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the hon. Member for Chelsea who moved the Instruction wanted to know why it was that this proposal was renewed, and also whether there were any new facts which had not been brought forward on previous occasions. His answer to that was that nearly all the previous projects of the County Council had been fragmentary, and open to the objection that they had termini and dead ends which this particular scheme had not. Another additional fact was that the London Road Car Company had issued a circular begging the House of Commons not to authorise a tramway over Westminster Bridge. He did not think the hon. Member for Chelsea would attach much importance to the circular of a rival company with which they had been bombarded. One of the circulars against the scheme came from a seedsman at Inverness, and Messrs. Tilling, the omnibus proprietors, were opposing the Bill because the construction of the proposed tramway might affect their pecuniary interest. Another letter was from a firm of upholsterers in Tottenham Court Road. They opposed the tramway on the broad ground that it might lead to a tramway in that thoroughfare. These were new facts—the objections were all interested and prejudiced, because the objectors had a pecuniary interest in opposing the tramway over Westminster Bridge. The hon. Member for Chelsea had asked the House to remember that four years ago a Joint-Committee recommended tubes as against tramways. The hon. Member should know that tubes as a means of communication were not so popular as they had been, and if he wanted corroboration of that he should go to the Stock Exchange and ask whether they were as anxious to promote tube schemes now as they were five or six years ago. They were neither popular nor healthy, and commercially they were not likely to be so successful in the future as the promoters said they would be. Neither tube railways nor motor omnibuses were so cheap, so clean, or so speedy as electric tramways. An under-river passage was not possible, it would cost a million of money, and it would mean a dip from Kennington-lane to the Gaiety Theatre or Southampton-row.

He could understand objection on aesthetic grounds if these tramways were to be iron monstrosities like the New York elevated railway; but the cars would be worked on the conduit system, they would be inoffensive in appearance, advertisements being altogether dispensed with. Motor omnibuses were longer and wider than the tramcars, and were dearer and dirtier. [Cries of "Why?"] Meet three motor omnibuses on a hot day in July and smell them. This tramway would not compete with the steamboats, and, if the House sanctioned the scheme, the tramways at Westminster Bridge could be connected with the tramways at Blackfriars Bridge very speedily. The hon. Member had dragged in Vauxhall Bridge. The answer to what he said on that subject was that the County Council did not build Vauxhall Bridge. He believed that the contractors were so hampered by the Thames Conservancy that they lost many thousands of pounds in carrying out the work. All sections of the London County Council were in favour of this scheme; the City, which was formerly very hostile, had only rejected it by one vote, all the London borough councils were in favour of it, and in fifteen days 110,000 signatures had been obtained to a petition in favour of the scheme. If the tramways were brought over the bridges and a circular route was formed, the crushing that now went on at the terminus on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge would be avoided. Westminster Bridge was wide enough—86ft. between the parapets—and the width of the Embankment varied from 80ft. to 110ft. Colonel Yorke had said in his evidence before the Commission that it seemed to him that the Embankment was a route eminently suitable for tramway traffic. There was less reason for opposing a tramway over Blackfriars Bridge, because fewer omnibuses went over it. 232 omnibuses passed over Westminster Bridge, whereas only 160 passed over Blackfriars Bridge. They believed that if they had only a circular route they would be able to avoid the crushing at the termini at both bridges, while much greater facilities would be given to the other traffic.

It was said, Why not wait for the motor 'buses? but motor 'buses were more noisy and much dearer than electric trams, and by moving all over the road they were an inconvenience to passing traffic. Mr. Robertson had given evidence that the working expenses of the electric trams was 6d. per mile, while the motor 'buses cost 1s. per mile for working expenses. He went to the motor exhibition and was very much interested in it. He wanted to buy a car for the Fire Brigade Committee. There were three of them on the job—they never did these things singly, or on War Office lines—and the motor-car which they tested cost in working expenses elevenpence halfpenny to one shilling per mile. Besides, the life of a motor 'bus was not more than two years, while that of an electric tram car was fourteen years. Therefore, on the ground of economy, the electric car held the field against the motor-bus. There were nine bridges which served twelve square miles of territory with 1,000,000 of population; and that 1,000,000 of population was denied all access from north to south. The result was that London, from a housing point of view, was becoming lop-sided. By a complete system of electric tramways the unequal distribution of population in congested districts would be equalised. He appealed to hon.

Members to allow the tramways to go over both the bridges and to have regard and consideration for the interests of the poorest of the poor, who would be most convenienced if the proposal of the Bill were adopted.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said that the hon. Member who had just sat down made the extraordinary statement that all the local authorities in London were in favour of these tramways.

MR. JOHN BURNS said that what he had stated was that no borough council had petitioned against the Bill.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS said they had not petitioned against the Bill, because the London County Council opposed their *locus standi*. He rose mainly for the purpose of informing the House that the Council of the City of Westminster, which was the only district directly affected by this tramway, was strongly and unanimously opposed to the proposal. That was a state of things which should not be lost sight of; and too great importance ought not to be given to such statements as had been made by the hon. Member for Battersea. He did not propose to follow that hon. Member into the smaller questions he had raised. He ventured to urge the House to look at this matter from the point of view of two broad issues. First, for the House to take this matter out of the hands of the Royal Commission on London Traffic and to settle the most important part of the question which had been committed to their consideration would be an absolute negation of the whole functions of a Royal Commission. That Commission had been considering this question most impartially, had taken a great quantity of evidence, and was on the eve of reporting; and yet this was the moment which the London County Council had chosen to forestall the decision of the Commission by committing the House to a plan to-day which might be found to be an anachronism to-morrow. Secondly, a new method of locomotion had been introduced since the Traffic Commission had been sitting. He did not think the House would accuse him of being over-partial to motor-cars, but he held that the development of the motor omnibus, long waited for, had an important bearing on the question of London traffic. Those who looked for a solution of the difficulties of locomotion in London to a combination of tubes for long distances and omnibuses for short distances were fortified in their views by the invention of the motor omnibus, which moved as quickly as a tramway car, was manipulated with greater ease to the traffic, and did not involve the expenditure of the ratepayers' capital. This system of motor omnibuses would not place the locomotion of London or the vast field of employment which it involved in the hands of a central authority, but would leave it open to private competition. He supported the Instruction.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) said he wished to make an appeal to the House to come to an early decision on the subject. There was an unofficial understanding between Members interested in the Bill that the division should be taken as soon after ten o'clock as possible.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said he wished to add one word in confirmation of the statement of the right hon. Baronet. Although he had no official connection with the matter it was distinctly understood that there should be a division about this time. The Leader of the House would remember that when that day was first allocated to Army Estimates, a strong feeling was expressed that the time should not be eaten into too much by other business.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London), who spoke amid loud and persistent cries of "Divide," said he objected to the proposal to carry the tramway across Blackfriars Bridge, and he thought it would have been more in consonance with what was right and proper if the County Council had first permitted the Report of the Royal Commission on Traffic in London to see daylight.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 171; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 100.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cullinan, J.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ffrench, Peter
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. N W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard John (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Kilbride, Denis
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt Hn. J W (Cum. Penr.
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, John
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehy, David
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whitmore and Sir Frederick Banbury.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John

Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cogan, Denis J.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice, Capt. E C (S. Andrw'sBghs
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Findlay Alexander (Lanark, NE
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gardner, Ernest
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'rH'mlets
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corry
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharpe
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Johnson, John
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdona, John Cumming
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Malley, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edw.
Rea, Russell
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Farfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Ure, Alexander
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (Sheffield
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Benn and Dr. Macnamara.

MR. SPEAKER: In the circumstances, in order that this matter may be disposed of by a Committee, and to give the House another opportunity of dealing with it and settling it in a more decisive manner, I shall give my vote for the "Noes."

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,101,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that there were two points to which he wished to draw the attention of the Committee—one had already been touched upon, and the other was new. The alterations in the organisation of the War Office to which the right hon. Gentleman had drawn attention were not really due to the initiative of the Secretary for War, to the activity of the Department, or even to the Government itself. They were due to certain Committees appointed by the Government. He did not mean to say that all the decisions of the Committees were wrong, but he did urge that no Government ought to resort to legislation by means of Committees outside their own body, as to whose composition the House was largely ignorant, of whose opinions they knew nothing, and whose proceedings were carried on in secret. He did not believe that that method was in harmony with past history. The Cardwell reforms were drawn up by Mr. Cardwell himself and considered by the Government; and he thought it would have been more to the credit of this Government if their scheme had been due to the Government and not to a Committee. It was to be noticed that in all his statements the Secretary of State far War had abandoned a certain amount of direction and control which, so for as could be judged, was now taken by a secret Committee of three, with whose names and persons the public were not familiar. The first four were really changes of name, such as had been effected hundreds of times by the War Office without attracting particular attention, while the last eight were concerned with work which used to be done in the Military Secretary's Department without fuss or bother, and carrying with it no really important or responsible duties such as would justify the prominent place given to the changes in the Memorandum.

With regard to the blue-water theory, the view of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State was very definite —viz., that invasion was an impossibility and raids were not a serious source of anxiety. The acceptance of such a theory would justify, and ought to be accompanied by, far greater changes than the Secretary of State had proposed either this year or last. But it was merely the expansion of a doctrine, never before accepted by a Government, though held by various Members for the last five years. In 1901, when the hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth advocated the theory, the Prime Minister said his view was the logical conclusion of the extreme naval school, and that if it was correct we were bound to disband the Militia, to cease giving subventions to the Volunteers, and not to trouble our heads about garrisoning any of our fortresses. Every one of those proposals had now been made by the Secretary of State for War, and he did not think that such changes ought to be made upon the *ipse dixit* of a Defence Committee, of the composition of which the House was largely ignorant. The Defence Committee was responsible neither to the House nor, necessarily, to the Government. It appeared to be nothing more than a private Committee of the Prime Minister's, to which he summoned or from which he excluded whom he pleased. Admiral Fisher and Sir G. Clarke were the two men who brought the Committee into existence, and, in the words of their own Report, it was—

> "A provision for obtaining the expert advice required for shaping national policy."

If, therefore, the other members depended upon expert advice, the two gentlemen who created the Committee also guided its decisions, and upon their advice the House was asked to accept the view that in future the blue-water theory was absolutely to control the military and naval policy of the country, although doubt was creeping into the minds even of advocates of that theory whether the policy could be sustained in its entirety. There was no recorded expert opinion, either military or naval, to be found in support of the extreme blue-water theory, but, on the other hand, there were some tolerably recent examples of naval operations which might be held to modify, if not to destroy, it. He was not arguing against a strong, efficient, and sufficient Navy. He was afraid that hardly enough stress was laid upon the sufficiency as apart from the efficiency of the Navy, The blue-water theory must rest upon rather the relative than the positive strength of the Navy; it must be sufficient to meet any possible naval combination that was likely to be presented against it. There were instances of the successful evasion of a superior naval force, the most notable case being that of the carrying of 35,000 troops in 300 transports from Toulon to Malta, and thence to Egypt, in the face of a far larger squadron commanded by Nelson. Japan had recently furnished other instances, while in the manœuvres two years ago the blockaded squadron in the Ionian Islands successfully evaded the blockading forces which were superior in number, and efficiency, and was not sighted until the two Fleets arrived at the appointed *rendezvous* five days later. But the most recent illustration was afforded by the Dogger Bank incident. The whole of the British Fleets were absent from the Narrow Seas, and, at the very time when the Prime Minister was defying the Russian nation with far greater courage than he had ever shown towards the Tariff Reform League, the Russian fleet was in command of the Narrow Seas, and for three days could have done anything it liked. Surely that showed that invasion was something less than an impossibility.

It was not known what British military opinion generally was upon the point, but, so far as he had been able to gather, it was opposed to the extreme blue-water theory, as it could not accept the view that invasion was an impossibility. The chances of success might be only one in a thousand or even in ten thousand, but an unsuccessful resistance of that one chance would be so absolutely fatal to the existence of the Empire that no possible means of defence ought to be neglected. He hoped that before they unreservedly committed themselves to this theory the House of Commons would remember that there were arguments on the other side, that the theory was new, and that it could not possibly be put into operation until it was too late to correct any mistakes that might arise in carrying it to its logical conclusion. The experience of many able and distinguished men was against the extreme theory. [" Name."] The Duke of Wellington, for instance. [A laugh.] Did the right hon. Gentleman laugh at the Duke of Wellington ?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to say that he certainly did laugh at the name of the Duke of Wellington being mentioned in this connection.

*Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE did not think the views of the Duke of Wellington should be laughed at simply because in his days steam power had not applied. The advantages of naval attack was certainly as great to-day as they were then. Steam, if it had revolutionised defence, had also revolutionised attack, and the events of the Russo-Japanese War had shown that, properly conducted, the attack was as powerful as ever. Another authority he might quote was Captain Mahan, who agreed with and emphasised the theory of Napoleon that the invasion of this country was possible.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Will the hon. Gentleman refer me to the passage ?

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he would endeavour to send it to the right hon. Gentleman; he had been most careful to verify his authorities.

In conclusion he would point out that the scheme of 1901 was dead, although some traces of it remained in the accounts; the scheme of 1902 was dead and buried; and the scheme of 1904 was in its death throes. The scheme of 1905, so far as anything was known of it, provided relief, but no reserves for India; it did not provide sufficient garrison for the colonial fortresses; it diminished the number of auxiliaries at home, and it increased the cost of the Army as it existed. The House were told that the War Office was to cost less and to be more efficient. As a matter of fact, more officers than ever were there employed, at a greater cost of £57,000. Last year there was a lack of agreement but no lack of loyalty on the part of the Army Council; this year it was doubtful whether there was either agreement or loyalty. There could not be loyalty without confidence, and co-operation without something like harmony was impossible. The Council was said to be divided into water-tight compartments, which suggested cast-iron doors devised to cut off communications and to prevent that interchange of views which was absolutely essential to keep the ship of State going. All the changes which had been introduced by the Secretary of State in Army organisation seemed to him to have reacted to the disadvantage of the regimental officer and the private soldier, the two classes to whom the country was most indebted in the last war.

*Mr. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) desired to impress on his right hon. friend the extreme difficulty under which the Militia suffered as to the uncertainty of their destiny. It was manifestly impossible to get officers to go into the Militia when they felt that all their work and the expense they would incur might be absolutely thrown away next year. It was imperative that they should know as soon as possible whether they were to be ended or mended. He did not deny that the right hon. Gentleman had considerable force behind him in the Report of the Duke of Norfolk's Commission when he spoke of the shortcomings of the Militia. But if there was to be a civilian service at all, it could not be demanded of them that they should always be able to do what Regular soldiers did. Militia officers usually had some private duties to attend to, and they did not pretend to be all that a Regular officer was. Militiamen could not be as fully efficient or as fully trained as Regular soldiers; the whole point was that if there was to be a civilian Army at all every encouragement should be given them to make themselves as efficient as they could. The proposals with regard to territorial regiments would not put the Militia officer in the same position as before; the conditions would be altogether different. He believed that if proper encouragement was given the Militia would show as much enthusiasm and zeal as could possibly be derived from any force outside the Regular Army. If they were given the opportunity of making the Militia efficient, of setting their house in order, he thought the country would have nothing to complain of in respect of that force.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is really something absurd in the fact that the House of Commons, which represents, or ought to represent, the country, is still, after more than four years, groping about to find the Army scheme of the Government. We have had several different schemes since 1900. The Secretary for India had a great recasting of the Army which we were told would make us all perfectly safe. Last year we had a new Minister installed in the War Office, a new War Office created; all the chief officials of experience, military and civil, were summarily got rid of; and yet, although these occurrences had occurred, and one would naturally expect that a little time would be required before a solid conclusion was arrived at, the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who is something of a quick-change artist, to adopt a phrase in use in certain places of amusement, was ready after a few weeks with a cut-and-dried scheme. But, unfortunately, we could get no satisfaction on the important point whether that scheme was approved by his colleagues. The Cabinet was absorbed in the investigation of the problem of our military requirements, and we were left in considerable doubt, and remain in doubt to this day, whether the scheme is to be made to suit the requirements or the requirements to be adapted to suit the scheme. We have had a factor introduced into the matter which evidently is of the first importance—namely, the great question of the North-West Indian frontier, and this is held over us to close our mouths if we venture to ask anything about the size or constitution of the Army—very much as that dreadful thing Home Rule is being held over the world in general political matters.

Last year we had avowedly provisional Estimates furnished; this year we looked for something more solid, but they are provisional Estimates again. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech explaining those Estimates, said a great deal of himself and a good deal of his successor, whoever he may be, but nothing, or very little, at any rate, of His Majesty's Government. But last Thursday something happened to which we have grown accustomed of late years. Communications were vouchsafed to another place which were denied to the House of Commons, and the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made a speech which throws more light upon the policy of the Government than anything we have heard in this House for the last eighteen months. There are two great questions at issue upon which the whole matter turns. There is the question of the Militia and the question of the terms of service, the constitution, of the infantry of the Line. Now, I think it is so desirable that the House of Commons should have a direct opportunity of learning what the policy of the Government is that I will read what Lord Lansdowne said. He was talking of the necessity of arresting military expenditure, and he said—

"We have, then, to consider from that point of view what is the proper place of the Militia, and I am glad to believe that in the opinion of most of us"——

"most of us" is a curious phrase—

"the proper place of the Militia is that it should form a part of that Army which in time of peace remains at home, but which in times of national emergency shall be available for use in the field beyond the limits of these islands. I have no doubt that if my right hon. colleague had these *data* to work upon he would have been justified in doing what I believe in his original proposal he desired to recommend to Parliament—

note the curiously detached way in which one colleague speaks of another; he "believes" that it was his intention to propose to Parliament—

"that he would have preferred that the Militia should be merged in the short-service Army of which we have spoken in these debates. But sentiment counts for a good deal in these questions, and it became obvious to us"—

that I suppose again is the whole Government, including the Whips—

"that a measure of that kind would have done great violence to the sentiment of a force which we greatly honour and which commands the esteem of the country. Therefore we propose that the Militia should retain its identity and that it should not be merged in the short-service Army, but that, on the other hand, it should be so framed, so equipped, and so officered, that it should be fit when occasion arises to take its place alongside the best troops of the Line for the purposes of foreign service. The noble Marquess expressed his objection to accepting these proposals with regard to the Militia until we have disclosed the whole of our scheme of Army reform. We have made no mystery of the great outline of that scheme."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

Well, there was great mystery made in the House of Commons.

"They were explained last year by the Secretary of State."

No, not as the opinions of the Government, but as the opinions of the Secretary of State, which is not quite the same thing.

"They have been set forth again in the Memorandum of the Army Estimates, and they have been more fully gone into in the Commons in the last two or three days. I thought it was well understood that the Army proposals contemplated the creation of a long-service Army, recruited for a term of nine years with the colours and three with the Reserve, liable at all times for service abroad, and that, on the other hand, there should be a short-service Army with a period of two years with the colours and six years with the Reserve, available for service abroad only in time of emergency. That is the broad basis of the new scheme."

Well, let us look at this new scheme now that we hear what it is. Let me speak first of the Militia. His Majesty's Government, as this shows us, have been oscillating between two extreme opinions. It is either obliterate the Militia, or exalt them. It recalls to me a friend of mine, a colleague in this House many years ago, who paid great attention to the thorny question which is still before us of the liquor traffic, and he said to me—

"I have devoted many years study to this question, and I have come to the conclusion that there are only two things to do. One would be total suppression, the other free trade in drink, and I do not care which of the two you adopt."

Well, that was recalled to me by this incident. You must either obliterate the Militia, because there is no use talking of a Militia if you make a Militia regiment a mere Reserve-creating machine, such as was proposed in the original scheme of the right hon. Gentleman—it is no longer the Militia as we know it, or as it knows itself; it may be something else very much better, but it is something altogether different; and I do not call that maintaining the Militia in existence at all. Then we have the proposals made, in which, of course, we all agree, that it should be improved in its character and strength and efficiency.

This tendency to go from one extreme to another is also discernible in what the right hon. Gentleman has said as to the view of the Government in regard to what is called the blue-water policy—the dinghy policy. The dinghy theory points straight to one thing and one thing only—namely, that we need not maintain any land forces whatever in these islands. But, on the other hand, if we do not accept the dinghy theory, then we are told, "You have nothing before you but conscription. You must have compulsory service of some sort if you reject this theory, and have any regard for the safety of these islands." I belong to a humbler school—what I venture to call the silver-streak school. It is quite good enough for me, and it has been good enough for this country for a great many years, as it may well continue to be. I am not afraid of the conquest of these islands; but I cannot get rid of the idea that there may be in some circumstances a partial invasion, or what is known as a raid; and to say that not even a dinghy can land on our shores is nothing less than an absurdity. On the other hand, I think that we ought to make full use of and never leave out of our minds the advantages which this country possesses from its insular position, while at the same time we ought not to exaggerate them. But to talk of compulsory service in this country is to imply that we are to come down from the vantage ground that we possess to the unfortunate position of our Continental neighbours with hostile Powers on every side. As to this Militia proposal that was before the House of Lords, I will not enter upon that now. But I associate myself with the objection that was made against dealing with the Militia in this piecemeal fashion; and I think we should know more before we alter the conditions of service in the Militia, because, for one thing, we do not know what calamitous effect upon the recruiting of the Militia these alterations of service may have.

Now I pass to the question of the two Armies. I am opposed to two Armies; and I heard with much pleasure the statement of his views by my hon. friend the Member for Oldham, who pointed out that this question of having two separate Armies under separate conditions had been before Government after Government, statesman after statesman, and soldier after soldier, and until recently had been rejected by them all. We are to have a short-service Army with only two years service, and then the men are to be passed into the Reserve; and this Army is not to leave our shores. Where is now the material for the operation of that part of the system? It is postponed, we are told; but I should like to know when to, and whether completely or only in part. What the right hon. Gentleman proposed was that there should be thirty-three battalions of Militia—that was all the Militia he wished to maintain—retained for this purpose, and thirty-eight battalions of the Line, which were to be converted into mere machinery for this purpose. The Government have been frightened out of the Militia part of the scheme. So we are left with only thirty-eight Line battalions to be treated in this manner. What sort of battalions will these be? They will not be part of the Regular Army. They will not be able to support and maintain and relieve the Army abroad. They will be isolated. They will be maintained merely for the purpose of breeding Reserves. As a friend of mine from India said to-day, the Army will be like a swarm of bees—part working bees and the rest mere drones. What will be the number of these Reserves? The right hon. Gentleman is now short of about half his material, and how will he fare for his full number? The old Reserve has been shown to be 6,000 short of the number required to fill up the establishment to war strength. These are figures that I have not seen contradicted. The right hon. Gentleman will, I daresay, contradict them, but they have been before the public now for a long time and have not been contradicted. The right hon. Gentleman takes a strong view about the Reserves. He denies that that can be called a Reserve which is only a force for completing the first Line. He says that the Reserve is meant for filling up and reinforcing the first Line later on. But his Reserve was 6,000 men short even of the first purpose. How much more short will it be when the Militia part of the Reserve is dropped? What will be their quality? They have two years training, they will have no experience of general service, no training with a regiment, they will be merely a mob of recruits, and they will be exceedingly young when in the service, as they have to be enlisted at eighteen years of age.

I do not enter into the question of officers, because I do not understand how it is to be arranged, but I will point out a peculiar thing. Here is the right hon. Gentleman, who is the apostle of *esprit de corps*. He has declaimed against the double-battalion system because it destroys *esprit de corps*. But if a man or officer is transferred from one battalion to another of a regiment wearing the same uniform and called by the same name this *esprit de corps* is destroyed; and here he is to have these Reserves freed from any regimental attachment altogether, and the regimental continuity is destroyed and the local associations are lost, as far as I understand. Is it wise to break up the solidarity and interchangeability of the Army and constitute it into two parts —one deprived of that training and efficiency that comes from varied service and varied experience in foreign stations? On this part we have mainly to depend for our Reserves.

Now, I turn to the other part of the Army, what is called the foreign or long-service part. Each battalion of it will be eighteen years abroad and six years at home. They will be localised in trying climates. It has always been considered most objectionable to put our gallant countrymen to this use. I remember well in the early days of the seventies, when all these questions were being considered and settled at the War Office, that the question largely turned on this point of the health of our men abroad. We all remember the case of the Presidency troops in India. They were in one sense a splendid body of troops, but their discipline came to be bad. They were kept a long time in India until they were invalided or until they died. Not only was the discipline bad, but their health was bad also. I have looked up the recent Army Medical Report of 1902. It is essential for the House to bear in mind these matter-of-fact circumstances, for they have really more to do with the efficiency of your system than all the fine theories that philosophers can devise. I find that after five years the men rapidly deteriorate in India. During the first five years the average invaliding annually varies from 25 to 30 per 1,000. When you come to the years between five and ten years service, the invaliding is 64 per 1,000. But you are to keep these men in India, and they are to suffer this deterioration in health and condition, and then you are to bring them home and turn them into the world to find their way about. It is a cruel and inhuman system.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Where does the right hon. Gentleman find that system?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Your nine-years men would be seven or eight years in India, and I have shown that after five years the tide turns, and from that time their health becomes worse. Why insist upon the proposed nine years? Even the seven years was an extension of what was desirable to meet the Indian complaints. The Indian Government complained of the great expense of constantly sending men backwards and forwards, and the enlistment was extended to seven years to meet that complaint. But changes have taken place since that concession was made. In the first place, I believe that freights for soldiers to and from this country are almost half what they were in those days. In the second place, under the recommendation of the Committee on Indian Expenditure a year or two ago, the Imperial Government undertook half the cost of that transport so that it is only a quarter of what it was in those days. Yet the right hon. Gentleman proposes to keep these men there two years longer. And what is the effect? He reduces the Reserves by two-thirds and he largely increases deaths and invaliding, two serious evils with no advantage that I can see. I commend these things to the consideration of the House, and I say that any such long prolongation of service is a mistake. These men are enlisted at nineteen years of age, and they are cast back into civil life at twenty-eight two years later than now, and this makes a very grave difference. In the first place it handicaps them because their habits have become settled in a life removed from their surroundings and they will have less opportunity of finding civil employment. In the second place, there is the marriage difficulty, always great, and increasing the lònger a man is kept so late in life under the conditions in which these young men serve And in the third place, when a man has served so long he has acquired a claim you can hardly resist to be put on the pension list. This proposal is for long service of nine years with the colours and only three with the Reserve—it is, on all grounds, a retrograde and undersirable step.

What, after all, does the right hon. Gentleman give us by all these changes that we have not got already? Consider how the old system served us splendidly in the South African War; 90,000, or nearly 100,000, were embarked in a few weeks during 1899 and 1900, and subsequently drafts were sent out to the number of 90,000 more, and that Army was organised for defence and for striking purposes, not for the conquest of a great territory. Now we are told we must have a huge Army and a great Reserve, and a great reservoir of power for the defence of the North-West Frontier. I want to know what are the new facts about the North-West Frontier; how are we to distinguish between prudent watchfulness and restless ambition? High military authorities have laughed at the fears expressed as to danger in that quarter. A mere shaking of the head will not dispose of these authorities; give us the data to support that shaking of the head. I will quote an authority which I have quoted in the House before on an occasion when the Prime Minister flaunted the North-West Frontier in our face. Sir H. Brackenbury —no mean authority—in his evidence given before the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, said the defence of India was already provided for in that quarter and that it would not be necessary or possible for this country to send out a single man more. What, I ask, has caused the change since that declaration made three or four years ago by an eminent authority, a military member of the Council? I am afraid there are large and ambitious views taken which —I will not say encourage—but certainly lead up to the whole idea of this exceptional danger to the North-West Frontier. We hear that as many men will have to be sent in case of a war in that quarter as went to South Africa; and the right hon. Gentleman is not content to stop there. I took down his words when he said we must be prepared to have men entering into a contest with the flower of other nations. That is an entirely new conception of the purpose for which our Army exists; and I would ask the Committee to try to put some limit to the cost of our preparations, to the expenditure of money, and to the demands for men. Lord Lansdowne a few years ago, speaking on these Army subjects in Edinburgh, said that of the men of serviceable age in this country—and I believe many Members of the House may not be aware of this fact—of the population available of serviceable age, no fewer than one out of four was actually serving at the moment he spoke either in the Navy, Army, or Auxiliary Forces. How much further are we to go? I believe that this exaggerated view of our danger and our necessities will lead the country into greater misfortunes, and I would ask again to be furnished with the data in order that we may calmly consider these matters.

I have only a word or two to say by way of going back on the subject of the Militia and Volunteers. As to the Militia, not only the members of that force but all of us are ready for any amount of improvements that may be made, and for great improvements. I believe the Army is steadily improving. I believe even the Militia is better organised, trained, and officered than it was. But go on improving it until you reach a sufficient and satisfactory pitch of efficiency. The Volunteers, also, are ready for any amount of training within reason that you choose to impose upon them, and I am sure that the whole House heard with astonishment the language in which the Secretary of State exposed what he believed to be the almost crippled condition of the members of that force. He has seen the Reports, and if those Reports have any justification what an exposure it is of the general physical condition of the whole community! The Volunteers are probably as good as their neighbours, and mostly young men of spirit, and yet we are told that 40 per cent. are unfit for their duties. A statement like that almost answers itself. But there is no reason in anything that has been put before us for accepting a shadowy scheme such as the right hon. Gentleman now puts forward—a scheme many parts of which are old nostrums that have been rejected again and again in past years—instead of a system which, capable of improvement though it may be, has at least done us good service for many years in the past.

Mr. PEEL (Manchester, S.): I beg to move, Mr. Chairman, that you now report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Peel.*)

Mr. CHURCHILL said he would take this opportunity afforded by the Motion to report Progress to state that he thought it would be more convenient if they could come to a decision upon this question at this particular juncture. He understood that that was the general desire upon both sides of the House. The feeling was that if they now allowed this general debate to close the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Sheffield and others who wished to move a reduction in reference to the Volunteers and the Militia would have a better opportunity of doing so. He thought the course he suggested would be for the general convenience of the House.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT said he hoped his hon. friend the Member for Manchester would withdraw his Motion to report Progress, because after the discussion which had taken place the House was really able to take a decision upon this question.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) asked if following the suggestion which had been made by the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield would preclude the Committee from having a general discussion on other Amendments.

*The CHAIRMAN: An understanding was come to the other day that on Vote 1 the discussion was to be general, however long it might last. I understand that the Prime Minister has placed at the disposal of the House Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for this purpose, and therefore a general discussion will not be precluded upon other Amendments.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the Leader of the Opposition had made an important speech, and he should be exceedingly loth to let such a challenge and attack to go unanswered. He might be confronted to-morrow with a specific reduction upon another subject, which would clearly preclude him from replying to the attack made by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): The Chairman has ruled otherwise.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the House had heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The Leader of the Opposition had made a very important speech, and he had made statements which he believed were inaccurate, and therefore he intended to exercise his right to set the House right upon this matter.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL. Don't talk it out.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he was not attaching any blame to anyone, but in view of the fact that the important speech of the Leader of the Opposition had been made at the close of the debate, he simply desired to reserve his right to reply to it.

And, it being midnight, the Motion to report Progress lapsed without Question put, and the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this day.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) called attention to the varying dates at which the Act came into force in various parts of the Empire, and suggested that the time had come when the promise he had received that one date should be fixed for the whole of the Empire should be fulfilled. A universal telegraphic system had brought into close relationship all the scattered parts of the Empire which, when this Act was first passed and put into force, were so far separated from each other that it was necessary to have different dates upon which the Act should come into force. He thought the time had now come when those dates should be revised. The War Office might fix upon some date upon which the Army Annual Act should be brought into operation all over the Empire, and the anomalies which were so apparent in Clause 2 should be put an end to. Everybody who had followed this Act knew that while there were only one or two clauses upon the Paper before them, in reality this Bill spread over several large folios. Hon. Members had not the vaguest idea what they were assenting to in passing this Bill. That, however, was not his point. What was more serious was that the people principally affected by this measure, had not got the vaguest idea what it was based upon or what it imposed upon them, and the House did not appear to fully realise the control which the House exercised through this Bill over the Army at large. The forces affected by this Bill ought to be afforded the opportunity of making themselves conversant with its provisions. He did not know whether the new proposals which were going to be put forward dealing with the Militia would in any way affect their *status* upon this particular Bill. The Leader of the Opposition had expressed the opinion that they might be adversely affected. With regard to the schedule it provided that where a hot meal was provided for the soldier it should be furnished at fourpence per night.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is hardly a matter to be discussed upon the Second Reading. It is more a matter for the Committee.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he should have thought that the schedule would have been open for discussion upon the Second Reading, but he would bow to Mr. Speaker's decision. He thought he had raised an important point with regard to the dates in regard to which he got a most definite promise last year. The point he had raised with regard to the Militia was certainly one which should be taken into consideration before this Bill was passed. He begged to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) seconded.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) said he had kept the pledge which he had formerly given that the Act and the Amendments in various years should be made more accessible to hon. Members, and a book setting forth the Amendments had been placed in the Library.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE asked if the book referred to was purchasable anywhere, and would it be presented as a Parliamentary Paper?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It will be kept in the Library of the House.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked if the alteration which the Militia were likely to undergo would in any way be affected by the operation of this Act? He should like an Answer to that Question. They understood that the Militia was to be placed upon a different footing to what had been the case in the past.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that future alterations in regard to the Militia were not in the least concerned in this Act.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this day.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE FROM THE DEBATES.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) asked the Patronage Secretary if he could give the House any reason for the absence of the Prime Minister from the debates to-day. The right hon. Gentleman left the moment the debate began, and was not present, except for a short time, during the speech of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, nor was he present when the Leader of the Opposition made his speech, nor when the Secretary of State for War addressed the House. The absence of the Prime Minister was the more remarkable because he was the president of the Committee of Defence, and the Army scheme of the Government seemed likely to land them in as much difficulty as the fiscal question. It was owing to the Prime Minister's special recognition of the very great importance of this subject that they had been allotted extra time for the Army debates this week. Did the Prime Minister intend absenting himself from all debates? The right hon. Gentleman had refused to attend fiscal debates and apparently he had no intention of attending debates upon a question which was causing as much difficulty on the Ministerial side of the House as upon the Opposition side. He should like to know if the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury could give them any reason for the Prime Minister's absence. Was he unwell, or what was the reason?

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said that surely they were not on every occasion to go without an Answer. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had generally treated the House with every courtesy, but the Question which had been put to him was a legitimate one which ought to receive an Answer. This was the only opportunity they had of pressing the matter.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said if they were only referring to an occasional absence it would be quite a different matter, but it occurred so frequently that they could only conclude that he desired to show to the public that he really felt a contempt for the proceedings of this Chamber. His absence to-day was only one more instance of the expression of that feeling on the part of the Prime Minister. No doubt the Patronage Secretary would reply that he was not in a position to answer this Question, but at any rate he might undertake to convey to the Prime Minister the strong expression of opinion which had been made from the Opposition side of the House that his continued absence from debates of first-class importance was a most regrettable incident, which they hoped would not recur.

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham) supposed it was quite useless to expect that any reply would be given to the Question. They had got used to being treated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, with considerable discourtesy. Perhaps if the right hon. Gentleman opposite said anything now he would only reveal that his chief had left him with no defence, and that under the circumstances he felt that the best thing to do was not to get up at this critical moment but allow the debate to lapse. He could assure the Patronage Secretary that they were not disappointed by the fact that he had not given them any Answer upon this Question. In asking Questions of this kind they had got used to being treated with considerable discourtesy. They did not mind this particularly, because they were anxious to impress upon the country the way in which the House was being treated by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister did not merely leave the House, but he organised a boycott. The right hon. Gentleman had organised on several occasions a deliberate boycott of the House. It was very disrespectful to the House; it was very disrespectful to the Chair.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): It is an insult to the Chair.

Mr. CHURCHILL said this had not only been the conduct of the Prime Minister in the past, but it might be the policy of the future. To-morrow, he supposed, there was to be another organised boycott. It should be known to what miserable and disreputable shifts the Prime Minister resorted to eke out his remaining weeks and months. The absence of the Prime Minister left the Chair without that protection to which it was entitled from the Leader of the House. Supposing upon this occasion he might be betrayed into saying something that would transgress the limits of order: the Leader of the House was not present to support the decisions of the Chair. He was very anxious that it should be known outside this House what extraordinary treatment the House of Commons was receiving from the Prime Minister, for he believed it was quite unprecedented. The Leader of the House not merely shirked his own duties, but he invented and calculated occasions when he could inflict deliberate and studied insults upon the House of Commons. He thought his hon. friend was well justified in raising this question. It had been raised before and it would be raised again. It was necessary to adopt this course in order that it should be made known throughout the length and breadth of the land that in the dregs of his career in office the right hon. Gentleman accepted every humiliation for himself, and offered every humiliation to the House of Commons.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said he could only speak once, and so had waited until hon. Members opposite had fired off their guns. The Question put to him was one to be put to the Prime Minister. [" Where is he ? "] He thought the Question might be put in the form perhaps of a starred Question, perhaps as an unstarred Question. If hon. Members opposite would put that Question down he was quite certain the Prime Minister would answer it.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said he did not think the right hon. Gentleman, whose courtesy they all acknowledged, quite realised that this was a special case. He had suggested that a starred Question should be put down. What they wanted was to secure the attendance of the Prime Minister during the Army debates, and for that purpose a Question put down on the Paper was useless. What the House wanted to know was what the Government intended to do in regard to the Army. But for his absence they would probably have ascertained what was really meant by these proposals. The Prime Minister was responsible for what was proposed to be done because he presided over the Committee of Defence. His hon. friend the Member for Oldham had pointed out that the House missed much by the absence of the Prime Minister. The most revolutionary changes had been proposed, and there could be do doubt that those changes had had a most disastrous effect upon the morale of the Regular Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers. Nothing had been vouchsafed to them as to the real intentions of the Government, and the one man above all others who could tell them was absent from the House. They deeply resented what they regarded, whether rightly or wrongly, as the discourtesy of the First Lord of the Treasury in boycotting the House on the occasion of a great debate to which he himself had invited the House.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne) asked whether the Chief Whip would convey to the Under-Secretary of the Board of Trade the importance of his being present at the fiscal debate tomorrow night.

No reply was given.

Adjourned at twenty-nine minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 4th April, 1905.

INTRODUCED.

Andrew Graham Murray, Lord Justice General and Lord President of the Court of Session in Scotland, having been created Baron Dunedin of Stenton, in the county of Perth, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment); South Metropolitan Gas.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Malvern Water Bill ought to be dispensed with. That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for the Leven's Patent Bill ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill. Read, and agreed to.

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [H.L.]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Truro Water Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Clacton-on-Sea Commissioners Bill [H.L.]; Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over to-morrow.

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Stewart of Garlies (E. Galloway) be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Hay (E. Kinnoull); read, and agreed to.

Torpoint Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over to-morrow.

Marylebone Chapels Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Bishop of London (in his place) consented to the Bill.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour; of the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Glasgow; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st December, 1904, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with reports of the Inspecting Officers, Assistant Inspecting Officers, and Sub-Inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into. Part I. Returns of Accidents.

COLONIES (MISCELLANEOUS).

No. 30. Pitcairn Island (Report by Mr. R. J. Simons).

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3334. Honduras.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, the Bill the Second Reading of which I now move is for the purpose of amending and extending the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. Perhaps I may be allowed to remind your Lordships that that Act made an entirely new departure. It gave to all those employed in dangerous pursuits reasonable compensation, whether the accident was caused by any default or wrong-doing on the part of their employer or not. As was natural, there were a great many novel proposals in that Act, which were to a large extent experiments, and it was therefore not surprising that the Secretary of State, after the Act had been in force for some years, thought it desirable to have an inquiry into its operations to see whether any amendments or extensions were desirable. In November, 1903, Mr. Akers-Douglas appointed a Committee to consider this question. Sir Kenelm Digby, who was Permanent Secretary at the Home Office at the time the Act was passed, was Chairman of the Committee, and there were representatives upon it of both employers and employed. They made a very full and able Report, dealing with a very large number of difficult questions that had arisen in the course of their inquiry, and I think they made no fewer than forty recommendations, many of which are dealt with in the present Bill. I think it is worth while to remark that on that Committee there was a very able and influential representative of the workmen in Mr. Barnes, and that nearly the whole of the proposals which the Committee made, most of which are now incorporated in this Bill, were accepted by him

I can assure your Lordships that I have no intention of attempting to touch upon the very large number of difficult questions of detail with which this Bill deals. It would obviously be impossible to do so in a Second Reading speech; but I think it will be expected, on such an important Bill as this, that I should attempt to give some account of the result of the Committee's inquiry with regard to the operation of the Act of 1897, referring particularly to the most important points on which they made recommendations and which are dealt with within the four corners of this Bill. Let me take, in the first place, one important matter which formed a considerable part of their inquiry—namely, how far the Act had led to litigation. Undoubtedly, if it had proved a litigious measure, as seems to be the general impression, that would go far to take away the benefits of the Act so far as workmen are concerned, for the object of such an Act as this must be to give a simple and quick remedy, if posible, without much litigation. But in a new measure of this sort, containing novel proposals, it was certain that all doubtful points would at once be taken to be decided in a Court of law. Many of them have been taken for the decision of one of the higher Courts, and it is probable that those decisions will decide what the law on the particular point is to be for the future; and, therefore, when once the law is settled, there will not be nearly as much litigation on these points as at first. In addition to that, it should be remembered that the Act dealt with a number of workmen engaged in the most dangerous trades—workmen numbering seven and a-half millions —and, in the enormous number of cases of compensation that must have arisen with that large number of workmen employed, it is perfectly clear that there might be a good deal of litigation without showing a very appreciable percentage of the number of cases decided.

Let me, on this point, quote the evidence laid before the Committee. There were witnesses who spoke for all sorts of different trades. I find that one witness, speaking on behalf of the Midland Collieries, stated that out of 251 claims only one went to arbitration. Evidence was given on behalf of the Builders Accident Insurance Company to the effect that only 1½ per cent. of cases were taken into Court out of the total number of claims; and another builders' society gave evidence that out of 300 claims only two were taken into Court. In the case of the Employers United Indemnity Society of South Wales the proportion was something of the same sort—98 per cent. of the cases were settled without dispute; and, taking two of the most important railway companies which gave evidence, I find that in the case of the Midland Railway Company the evidence was that practically all the disablement cases were settled by agreement without going to law, and that in the case of the North Eastern Railway Company, out of thousands of cases only three had been taken into Court. I think in those circumstances the House will not be surprised that the Committee, having heard a vast amount of evidence with regard to this particular point, came to the deliberate conclusion that on the whole the amount of litigation produced by the Acts of 1897 and 1900 had been very small compared with the great number of cases settled by agreement. At the same time they went on to say—and no one will be surprised at the statement—that they thought the proportion of litigation might and ought to be further reduced. The Committee stated in their Report that the impression left on their minds was that where the organisation of associations both of employers and workmen was most complete there was less amount of litigation.

As a contrast to some of the cases I have stated, I think I ought to call attention to one particular provision which was brought prominently before the Committee as having given rise to a serious amount of litigation. The case I refer to is dealt with in the first clause. It is where a workman has the alternative of either proceeding under the Compensation Act of 1897 or trying to recover under the Employers Liability Act. It was stated before the Committee that a serious state of things had arisen from the fact that there were a large number of cases where workmen had got into the hands of somewhat unscrupulous solicitors who, even where there was very small chance of recovering under the Employers Liability Act, had recommended them to take proceedings under that Act, with the result that there had been a very large expenditure on costs, and the percentage of cases in which they had recovered had been very small indeed. It is curious to notice that this particular point has most seriously affected the workmen's interests in Scotland. It appears that in Scotland there are a considerable class of speculative law agents who have advised workmen to go under the Employers Liability Act, and the result there has been much more serious, because under the Scottish law workmen can claim to have the case tried by a jury, with the result that the costs are very much heavier than they would otherwise be.

Let me give one instance only. A witness stated that forty-three cases under the Employers Liability Act went before juries; that eleven of those cases were decided, after hearing, in the workman's favour; that the amount of compensation recovered was £1,735, an average of about £158 in each case; and that the expenses in connection with those eleven cases were not less than £3,050, an average expenditure of about £277. I think your Lordships will agree that that is a scandal which ought to be prevented from continuing if possible. Many witnesses advocated that the option should be taken away from the workman of going under the Employers Liability Act when he had a remedy under the Compensation Act, and the Committee recommended that where the Court decided that the workman had an adequate claim under the Compensation Act he should not be allowed to go for compensation under the Employers Liability Act. But that is not the proposal which is made in this Bill. The proposal in the Bill is, shortly, this: that in a case where the workman has the option of proceeding under the Employers Liability Act or the Compensation Act he shall continue to have that option, but that if he tries to recover under the Employers Liability Act and the employer admits his claim under the Compensation Act, the procedure shall be under the arbitration clauses of the Compensation Act, which will lead to very much less expense; and if the workman is not successful in making good his claim under the Employers Liability Act, the Court is at once to proceed to give compensation under the Compensation Act, but before the compensation is paid to the workman the costs are to be subtracted which are caused by proceedings having originally been brought under the Employers Liability Act instead of under the Compensation Act. It is hoped that this will do much to discourage a practice which has been too prevalent, and it is as much in the interests of the workman himself that he should recover without these large costs as it is in the interests of the employers.

I will refer to one other point in connection with which the Government hope to do away with much litigation—the case where the medical referee is called in. It is found that the power has not been nearly so much made use of as was expected, and it is proposed under the Bill to allow the medical referee to be called in at a much earlier period than has been the practice hitherto. Hitherto he has often been called in only after a large part of the law expenses have been incurred, and it is hoped that if he is called in earlier and his decision as to the physical state of the workman is accepted as conclusive, it will put a stop to a good deal of litigation that has hitherto taken place.

The House will remember that when the Act was in Committee in this House seven years ago there was a good deal of discussion as to the burden that would be placed on the coal trade. There has been a considerable amount of evidence given before the Committee with regard to the actual burden placed on the coal trade, and I think the most convenient way to refer to it would be to take the cost per ton that the Act has involved in compensation for workmen. I will take the evidence given on behalf of three of the largest colliery owners' funds—the Midland Colliery Owners Indemnity Fund, the Northern Employers Insurance Fund, and the West Yorkshire Coalowners Fund. I find that the cost of the Act in the first year was in the first case ¼d. per ton; in the second and third cases it was a little more; and it has been found to be steadily rising during the last five years, till in the last year the figures were:—Midland, ½d. per ton; Northern, nearly ⅔d.; and West Yorkshire a similar figure. The strong feature in these figures is that since the year 1899—the year of the first figures—the cost of the Act has been steadily and largely increasing every year. There are two causes for that. The better the Act was known the more readily workmen applied for compensation under it; and in the second, third, and fourth year it was necessary not only to pay the compensation for the year, but the accumulated amount of compensation due to pensioners who had been injured in the previous years, and it is very difficult to say when that will cease. It cannot cease increasing until the pensioners die out or are removed from the fund.

One witness gave it as his opinion that it would go on increasing for four years, and that the utmost amount required would be ¾d. per ton; but I should have great hesitation in accepting a figure of that sort, especially in view of the experience of foreign countries. In a great many countries of Europe an Act of this sort has been in force for a much longer period than in this country. In Germany an Act similar to this has been in force, I believe, for twenty years, and figures have been published which show that even after this long period of years the cost of compensation is still steadily increasing. Under these circumstances, my Lords, the Government feel that they should act with very great caution indeed in regard to increasing or altering the financial burdens as established by the Act of 1897, especially as we cannot say whether we are at anything like the end of the present charge, which already falls heavily on many trades, notably on the coal trade. What employers complain of more than the heavy charge is the uncertainty of the Act, and the fact that they do not know when they will be exposed to liability. One of the objects of this Bill is to do away with a great deal of that uncertainty, to try and simplify the Act and get rid of litigation, and to make the operation of the Act more certain.

Representation was made by some employers to the Committee that the clause which prevents a workman getting compensation in a case where he has contributed to the accident by serious misconduct has been very little operative. It was pointed out that there have been very few cases in which this has been held by the Courts to be a bar to recovering compensation, and the suggestion was made that it might be of more effect if disobedience to certain rules was made the test of losing compensation rather than that it should be left to the Courts to decide what was wilful misconduct. For reasons which were given at the time when the Act was passed, the Government do not think it would be possible to say that all breaches of rules should debar a workman from getting compensation. No doubt, rules like those with regard to lights in a mine are such that a workman ought to be debarred compensation if he deliberately breaks them; but the Committee were of opinion, and the Government have taken the same view, that it is not possible to lay down strict statutory definitions of what should be the rules the breaking of which should prevent a workman getting compensation. They have left it to the discretion of the Court.

With regard to workmen the Act has, on the whole, worked effectively and given them the reasonable compensation which it was intended to give them, but there are certain directions in which the Act has had a very adverse effect on the position of workmen. One is with regard to the employment of old men. It is difficult at all times in certain trades for old men to find employment, but the evidence shows that the difficulty has been largely increased by the operation of the Act. Having to pay considerable compensation, employers are unwilling to employ old men who, in the first instance, would be much more likely to have accidents than younger men, and, in the second place, would be more seriously affected by an accident if it did happen. The same is true with regard to men who are partially disabled. I understand that the insurance companies will not insure them at all, because the results of an accident may be so serious that they may be permanently disabled. The Government think that this point ought to be met, and they propose in the Bill to allow old men, and partially disabled men, to agree with their ememployers as to the maximum to be paid. That maximum may be lower than is provided in the Act, but must not be less than 5s. weekly, or £25 in a lump sum where death results. This will, we hope, enable a large number of old men who have not been hitherto employed to obtain work.

I now come to the deliberate provision in the Act of 1897 which prevented any compensation being given for the first fortnight after the accident. It has been strongly contended on behalf of the workmen that this clause should be altered, and that they should be allowed to have compensation for injury during the first fortnight. It has been represented that in some cases the present provision has the effect of encouraging malingering, because if a man is so slightly injured that he need not be kept away from his work very long, he is induced to remain away over the fortnight in order to get compensation. On the other hand, the old arguments which were used at the time the Act was passed are certainly fully in force now—that it was not intended to give full compensation to workmen for the results of accidents, and that during the first fortnight it was much easier for them to make the necessary provision than it would be if they were kept out for a longer period. But evidence of a very remarkable character was placed before the Committee as to what the effect would be supposing you were to allow compensafor the first fortnight in addition to the compensation as at present given. Sir Andrew Noble contrasted the system of compensation which was in force for some years before the Act came into operation with the actual amount of compensation paid under the Act. Under that system compensation was paid for all trivial accidents, and in the five years previous to the Act coming into force the number of accidents amounted in the first year to 10 per cent. of the number of workmen employed, and it went up in the last year to nearly 15 per cent.

What was the result when the Compensation Act was substituted for the scheme that had been in force previously? Why, in the first year the number of cases went down to 3 per cent., and in the four years following that amount had not risen. It is clear from these figures what an enormous number of persons would receive compensation if the first fortnight was added to the compensation given in other ways. In addition, the Committee also received evidence on this matter from the insurance companies. They asked the insurance companies what, in their opinion, would be the additional risk incurred if the first fortnight was added. The General Accident Insurance Company stated that they thought the additional premium required would be 35 per cent.; the Sun Life Company said it would be as much as 50 per cent.; that view was also taken by the General Insurance Company, and the evidence of all the insurance companies was that the additional risk would be something between 35 and 50 per cent. Under those circumstances, and with those figures before them, the Government felt that if they were to comply with the workmen's request in this respect they would be altering the financial policy of the Act of 1897; and, looking to the rapid increase of the claims for compensation, they do not feel that they would be justified in making a change in the law which would put such a very heavy expenditure on the employers.

I will leave the Amendments which are included in the Bill, and pass to the proposed extensions of the original Act. They are extensions which may be said to come almost within the scope of the Act itself. I will instance some of them. In the Act as originally passed persons employed in building operations only got compensation if some part of the building on which they were working was more than thirty feet high, and where machinery on scaffolding was used. It is needless to say that the drawing of that line has given rise to an immense amount of litigation, and to all sorts of cases of difficulty in the Courts. The Government feel that this is a matter which ought immediately to be altered, and for the future persons employed on all buildings, irrespective of those conditions, will receive compensation for accidents. The same sort of difficulty has arisen with regard to persons employed in quarries. They could not get compensation under the original Act if they were employed in a quarry which was less than twenty feet deep. Many of the accidents which happen in quarries from different causes are equally prevalent in quarries which are not twenty feet deep, and under this Bill the provision as to depth will be done away with, and all employed in quarries will get compensation. There has also been some difficulty in the case of railways owing to the way in which the Act was worded. It is proposed by this Bill that compensation for accidents on railways shall now be extended to persons employed on tramways, and private railways and sidings.

Further, it is proposed to extend the Act to carriers—not to foot carriers—but to carriers using horses. I do not know whether your Lordships are aware how dangerous the calling of a carrier is. I have had it brought to my notice in connection with the railway company of which I am a director. We have a report made every fortnight with regard to the number of accidents to men in the service of the company, and your Lordships would be surprised to hear what a very large proportion of them are accidents to men carrying goods to and from railway stations, and who are quite away from any danger from the railway itself. At present a carrier in the employment of a railway company would get compensation if he were on the premises of the railway company at the time of the accident, but he would get no compensation if the accident happened in the street. It is also proposed to extend the Act to persons employed in the care and management of horses and locomotives, which would include drivers of motor-cars, and also to laundries where steam power is used. It appears that there is very little danger in the case of laundries where steam power is not used. The Bill, therefore, will not apply to those laundries. It is also proposed to extend the Act to workshops where more than five people are employed, and also to warehouses. Those, I think, are the principal trades to which it is proposed to extend the Act, and they are very similar in character to those already included. At all events, they are all of them dangerous trades, and it has been thought desirable to give them the benefit of the Act. Two classes of people are not included in the Act—seamen and fishermen; and I ought, I think, to explain the reasons why they are not included. The machinery of the Act is not at all suitable for dealing with the case of seamen, who are employed in all parts of the world, and it might conflict with some of the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Acts; therefore it has been thought better that the case of seamen should be dealt with separately by provisions which would be more suitable for giving them compensation. With regard to fishermen, the Committee suggest that an inquiry should be instituted to see whether the provisions of the Act would be suitable, but at present, at all events, the Government are not prepared to recommend that the Act should be extended to that class, although both seamen and fishermen are employed in dangerous callings.

I have endeavoured to point out the main features of the Bill, and I am aware that there are a very large number of important and difficult points which I have not ventured to touch upon at all at this stage. With regard to the extensions, let me say that they have been carried out in conformity with the promises which were made in the other House by the Secretary of State, who undertook to see to what extent he could extend the provisions of the Act, which, on the whole, has worked well and satisfactorily. If I have not made allusion to a large number of other cases, I hope I have said enough to show that this Bill is not framed in the interests of any special class. It is not brought forward in favour of either employers or employed specially. Its object is to make the operation of the Act more simple and more certain, to do away with litigation as far as possible, and to secure, at the least cost, fair compensation to those employed in dangerous trades; and to do this without putting any unnecessary and undue burden on the great industries of this country whose success and development are of so much importance. I move that the Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Belper.*)

Lord DAVEY: My Lords, I congatulate my noble friend who has moved the Second Reading of this Bill in so interesting a speech on having brought in a measure for amending the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. I can assure him, from judicial experience of the difficulties of that Act, that certain Amendments were much needed, and I think that all the Judges who have had the very tiresome task of endeavouring to make sense of the provisions of the Act of 1897 will cordially welcome a Bill for removing some of those difficulties. But, my Lords, this Bill is a very difficult one to understand. I do not know whether your Lordships have endeavoured to master the working of its details. I have myself tried to do so, but I have not, I confess, succeeded in thoroughly grasping what the provisions of this Bill are; and for this reason, that you have to compare it with the old Act step by step to see how the new clauses will dovetail into, not only the language and the sections which are amended, but into the general scheme of the old Act, and you have also to see how far the provisions of this Bill will meet the difficulties which have been pointed out over and over again—and they are very numerous—by the learned Judges who have had to construe the Act.

In my opinion it would have been much better to have repealed the old Act and enacted a new measure embodying as much of the old Act as it was thought advisable to retain and incorporating the Amendments proposed by the noble Lord. We should then have had an intelligible Bill before us which those who read could understand, instead of a Bill which I venture to say, without any disrespect to the intelligence of noble Lords, your Lordships will have some difficulty in understanding. I regret extremely that that course was not taken. I can assure the noble Lord who has brought in the Bill that if it had been taken it would have done a great deal not only in assisting your Lordships and the other House in understanding the Bill, but also in enabling the Judges to construe it. I cannot describe the tiresome and difficult task which a Judge has to undertake when he is called upon to construe an Act which purports to be only a partial Act, and which can only be understood by comparing it with other Acts and trying to piece them together so as to make out what the actual enactment is.

Another reason why I regret that the course I suggest was not taken is this, that the old Act was not worth retaining. The scheme of the Act was faulty and the details crude and not thought out. In many respects it was obscure, and in some respects the sections contradicted each other, and the definitions which were given in the definition clause for the purpose of explaining the meaning of the words frequently overlapped each other and as frequently left a gap which was not filled up. I do not wonder that the Act of 1897 has had the unenviable distinction of being called the worst-drawn Act on the Statute-book, and that it has led to a greater amount of litigation of a serious character than any other Act in the short space of seven years has done. I do not doubt what the noble Lord said, that the actual number of cases litigated, that is to say, which were brought into Court for the purpose of disputing compensation, is not large compared to the number of cases in which compensation has been paid; but the peculiarity of this Act is the character of the litigation it has occasioned, and the fact that the litigation has been caused almost exclusively by the obscurity of its provisions and the contradictory character of its directions.

Let me take only one instance which was referred to by the noble Lord—the provision dealing with the height of a building. For some reason—to save the draftsman trouble, I suppose, for I can assign no other reason—the Act defined a building within the Act as one of a certain height and in which scaffolding was used. As one of the learned Judges—I think it was the Master of the Rolls—pointed out in the Court of Appeal, the accidents which were to be compensated for had nothing whatever to do with the use of scaffolding. If it had been said that the use of a scaffold led to a greater number of accidents, or that it was only intended to compensate for those accidents which were in some way connected with scaffolding, I could have understood it, but the accidents which were to be compensated for had nothing whatever to do with the use of scaffolding or the height of the building. For instance, if a plasterer was at work in one of the lower rooms of a building, or, it may be, in the basement, and sustained an accident, he got compensation if the building was thirty feet high; but if the building was only twenty-five feet high, although the risk was exactly the same, and although he was employed at precisely the same work, he did not get compensation. That provision, I need scarcely tell your Lordships, led to a vast amount of litigation, which ended only in your Lordships' House; and those who take part in the judicial business of your Lordships' House will, I am sure, confirm me in saying that we have had considerable difficulty in deciding cases which have been brought before us under the Act, and that there has been a great amount of difference of judicial opinion.

I have not been able to study this Bill sufficiently or to compare it with the cases, of which the books are full, which have been decided on the old Act, to know whether it will remove most of the serious blots which have been detected in the course of that litigation; but I am not satisfied that it will. There was the case, which gave rise to an appeal to this House and on which there was great difference of judicial opinion, as to the relation between an "undertaker" and a sub-contractor. I find in the Bill that an "undertaker" in the case of a building is the person who undertakes to do the work, which one would suppose, but your Lordships know that a great amount of building is done by sub-contractors. One contractor undertakes to erect a building, but he lets out the glass work, the slating, and other departments to sub-contractors. Are those sub-contractors "undertakers" towards the workmen whom they employ? That is a question on which there was a difference of judicial opinion in this House, and I cannot find that it has been solved in this Bill.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): In Clause 4.

LORD DAVEY: I accept my noble and learned friend's statement, and am glad to hear it. But there is also the question, what is the relation of an "undertaker" and an employer to each other? Has that been up cleared in this Bill? These are all questions which will have to be carefully considered. I need scarcely say that I do not intend to offer any opposition to the Second Reading of this Bill, but I hope my noble friend will give us ample time before taking the Committee stage to consider the measure, which I am sure he will admit requires to be examined very carefully in order that we may assist the House, so far as we can, in putting it into a useful shape and making it a complete Bill.

*The Marquess of RIPON: My Lords, like my noble and learned friend who has just sat down, I do not rise for the purpose of offering any opposition to the Second Reading of the Bill. On the contrary, I think that in many respects it will make considerable and important improvements in the present law. But the subject is one of great difficulty, as I am sure has been shown by the noble and learned Lord, from whose speech I confess I derive some comfort, because, being myself only a layman in these matters, I am not so much ashamed as I was before of not being able to understand this Bill. If my noble and learned friend cannot understand it, how can I? I do not propose to touch upon any of the legal questions which have been alluded to by my noble and learned friend, except so far as this. The noble Lord who brought in the Bill touched upon the question of litigation under it, and spoke as if he thought the complaints which had been made against its working on the ground of its character and of the litigation which had arisen under it had been to a large extent unfounded. After the description which has been given to us by my noble and learned friend behind me of the character of the Act and the great difficulty of understanding it, the noble Lord can hardly be surprised if the litigation to which it has led has been a matter of criticism.

Lord BELPER: Perhaps I may be allowed to state that I quoted the opinion of the Committee who had inquired exhaustively into the subject. I quoted their view that the litigation had not been very great in proportion to the large number of cases settled.

*The Marquess of RIPON: I have the highest respect for the Committee and the able Report they made, but it does not do away with the opinion of a learned Judge like my noble and learned friend behind me who has just addressed us. If there has been any unreasonable criticism of the Act in respect of the litigation to which it has led, my noble friend opposite has only to thank the author of the Act for the manner in which he boasted that it was one of the most perfect measures that had ever been devised, and upon which it was quite impossible that important litigation could arise. That, my Lords, is probably the reason why the Act has in that respect been so much criticised. This Bill does a great deal that is good. It greatly extends the sphere of the operations of the Act of 1897. It was felt at the time by those, at all events, who were in opposition to be a great flaw in the Act that the operation of it was so narrow, and its extension now is to be very much commended. It is certainly a great improvement to get rid of such a peculiar, and, if I may say so in connection with an Act of Parliament, ridiculous provision as that of the famous thirty feet building regulation.

But I cannot help turning my attention to those who are still left outside by this Bill. Their position is a very difficult, and, I think, hard one. The more widely you extend the Bill the greater, as it seems to me, is the hardship upon those who are not brought within its operation. I know that the members of the Committee in their Report have given strong reasons for not extending the Bill, at present, at all events, further than it goes; but at the same time I cannot help thinking that the sounder principle would have been to make the Bill generally applicable and then to have made any special exceptions that you might have thought necessary. There may be cases in which exceptions would have been necessary, but if you had made the Bill generally applicable you would have laid it down that as a general principle persons engaged in labour are entitled to compensation of this kind. They have a further claim on this ground that those trades which are not brought within the purview of this Bill remain subject to the pressure of the doctrine of common employment. Long ago those with whom I am accustomed to act desired to get rid of that doctrine altogether, and we brought in a Bill for the purpose, which ultimately failed. I think it is very hard indeed that those to whom you refuse—it may be for good reasons, I do not wish now to express any opinion on that point—the benefits of this Bill should still be specifically left under the operation of the doctrine of common employment. I think it would have been very desirable if the Government could have seen their way to lay aside the prejudice created by former discussions and boldly face the abolition of that doctrine. I do not suppose this will be the final Bill on the subject; but, as I have said, it effects improvements, and if it can only be brought into a shape legally workable it will certainly have great advantages over the Act as it at present stands.

The last paragraph in the Report of the Departmental Committee touches on the question of compulsory insurance, and seems to me to indicate a desire on the part of the Committee that that matter should be carefully gone into and considered. I am not about to discuss that question now. It lies altogether outside the purview of this Bill, but I think the whole character of the Report points distinctly to this, that the great question of national insurance for accidents is one which ought to be further considered by the Government, with a view, if possible, to adopting some system such as that which exists in Germany and, I believe, in other countries.

That, my Lords, is all I have to say on the Bill as a whole, but I should like to make just one or two observations in respect to some of its details, in order that these matters may be brought to the notice of the noble Lord previous to our going into Committee. The noble Lord in his speech alluded to a question upon which working men feel very strongly—the provision that no compensation should be given for the first fortnight. Their feeling upon the subject is not unnatural. I have looked at the Report, and have read the views expressed by the witnesses who were unfavourable to any alteration of that enactment. I am not quite sure that the insurance witnesses are to be taken as the most competent on the subject. At all events, their views are more or less theoretical. But there is an important piece of evidence in this Report to which I would for a moment refer your Lordships. It is not in the evidence given before the Committee, but in the Memorandum of Mr. Barnes. Upon that subject, as the noble Lord is well aware, Mr. Barnes differed from his fellow-members on the Committee. He wrote—

> "I think that the provisions for the Ac should begin to apply at the end of a certain number of days, say, four or six, as provided by trade unions and friendly societies. These bodies have found the shorter time quite sufficient to exclude cases of minor injury, and with the suggested improvements with regard to medical examinations I think the same would apply to the Compensation Act if a shorter period of exemption were adopted."

That which seems to me to be important in that statement is the reference to experience of trades unions and friendly societies. Their interests in this matter are just the same as the interests of the employers. They do not wish to pay out of their funds anything which is not due, or to encourage malingering, and their experience is practical experience. I do not know how far that part of the matter was considered by the Committee, but I would suggest to the noble Lord that he should —not in connection with this Bill perhaps, but at some future time—make himself acquainted with what has been the practice of those great bodies engaged in payments in cases of accident, and see whether they have found any difficulty in working the shorter period.

The other point is this. Under the third clause of this Bill, the time for giving notice of an accident is more limited than in the principal Act. It is to be limited now to six days. I am quite aware that power is given to the County Court Judge to extend that period, if necessary, or at all events to overlook the neglect if the notice is not given within that time; but I am bound to say that in my opinion six days is a very short time in many cases, especially in cases of serious accidents. A family is so disturbed and disorganised by a serious accident to the breadwinner, and, it may be, by his death, that I would ask the noble Lord to consider whether it is really necessary to make this alteration. The principal Act, as the noble Lord knows, practically left the consideration of the time to the Judge. It was to be a reasonable time, but he was to decide whether it fulfilled the requirements of the Act or not. It strikes me that that was a better arrangement than the one now proposed, because then the Judge would have felt himself free to deal with the particular circumstances of the case, whereas if you lay down a period of six days he will feel himself bound to as much as possible limit the time in that way. Those are the only two points which strike me at the moment. I hope that the noble Lord when we get into Committee will give his reasons for this last change, to which he did not allude in his speech. With these few observations, and rejoicing that at last the authors of the Act of 1897 have found out some, at all events, of the defects of that measure, I welcome this Bill, and support its Second Reading.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I do not rise to offer any objection to the Second Reading of this Bill; but I would like to ask whether any one of your Lordships has ever seen a Bill which was so unintelligible. I was very much consoled by hearing that the noble and learned Lord who spoke last but one could not understand it. If Lord Davey and noble Lords who are learned in the law cannot understand it, what chance have we poor unfortunate laymen? If we had been dependent solely upon the Bill for arriving at the meaning of its provisions, we should have been in a state of absolute perplexity and bewilderment; but, fortunately, the noble Lord when he printed the Bill also printed a White Paper, and it is that Paper which your Lordships must read if you wish to understand the provisions of the Bill. When the noble and learned Lord said it would have been very much better if the Act had been repealed and the operations which it was proposed to re-enact had been reprinted together with the Amendments, I could not help feeling that that was a proceeding which your Lordships would have welcomed with the greatest delight. But that is a form of proceeding, unfortunately, which there is no chance of having adopted. That is the misfortune of our position. Bills are prepared to pass, and in order that a Bill may pass it is desirable, from the draftsman's point of view, that there should be as little as possible in it, as printed, which is capable of attack; and therefore I think that in this Bill the draftsman may be said to have surpassed himself. The Amendments which it is proposed to make are simply unintelligible when taken in the Bill as printed, and I greatly fear that if the present practice of drafting is continued we shall understand less and less the Bills laid before us.

This Bill is essentially one for consideration in Committee and therefore I do not propose to detain your Lordships at any length at this stage; but I wish to call the noble Lord's attention to one point. The noble Lord in his speech did not explain to us why in Clause 7 the interpretation of the word "dependants" is enlarged. The enlargement of the definition of that word, of course, greatly increases the extent of the Bill. If your Lordships will look at the White Paper you will see that in the Act as it stands only direct ascendants and descendants and the widow are included, but under this Bill "dependants" will mean such of the members of the workman's family as were wholly or in part dependent upon the earnings of the workman at the time of his death, and as are residing in the British Islands; that is to say, wife or husband, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, step-father, step-mother, son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, step-son, step-daughter, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister. Those are all new words, and the result is to bring in persons who are not in the direct line of ascent or descent, and thereby largely to extend the Bill. That is a matter which I have no doubt the noble Lord will explain when we go into Committee, but it is one of such importance that I thought it worth while to mention it at this stage.

*The LORD BISHOP of LONDON: My Lords, I should like, on behalf of the great body of Christian workers who visit these men after their accidents, to add a few words in support of the Second Reading of this Bill. It so happens that in 1897, when the previous Act was passed, I was in daily contact with working men, both in health and in sickness, and whatever hard words may be used in connection with the Act of 1897 I can certainly say that it did remove a burning sense of injustice from the working classes. Therefore, because this Bill enforces the principle in the Act of 1897, I should support it if it did nothing else; but it goes further and greatly extends the provisions of that Act. The fact that this Bill embraces a large number of those who were under a sense of injustice owing to their being excluded gives a second reason why we should support it. I am keenly conscious of the difficulty with regard to old men. Only those who really see day by day what is the fate and destiny of individual men know what a terrible injury it is to a working man at this moment to be old at all—to be over forty. Therefore, if the working of the Compensation Act, which has done so much good, can in any way be modified on behalf of old men, who certainly have suffered as a result of its provisions, it is a matter for gratification. I have the greatest pleasure in supporting the Second Reading of the Bill.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, if I could look at this question from a theoretical point of view I should heartily agree with my noble and learned friend opposite that it would have been much better if a new Bill had been introduced repealing the Act of 1897; but the difficulty in the way of that is that it would add very much to the Parliamentary labours of carrying the Bill through both Houses. While we in this House might thus have framed a much more perfect measure than can be produced by taking this supplementary Bill, there would be considerable difficulty in carrying it through the other House. I would ask the noble Marquess the Leader of the House if the Government will assist us by giving us every opportunity of dealing with this Bill carefully in Committee. I hope the Committee stage will not be taken before Easter. This is not a question to be dealt with in Standing Committee; the responsibility of framing the measure must be borne by the Committee of the Whole House. Everybody is agreed with my noble and learned friend Lord Davey as to the difficulty of construing the present Act. That difficulty will be much greater when we have this supplementary Act to read in with it, and I am appalled at the difficulty which Courts of Justice will experience in understanding it. The Government apparently have been fully aware of that and have endeavoured to meet it, but I am afraid they have endeavoured to do so in a way which must be carefully considered before being sanctioned by your Lordships' House. In Clause 22 of the Bill it is provided that when this Bill becomes an Act, and in order, I presume, to facilitate the reading of it with the original Act, the King's printer is empowered to print the principal Act "with the additions, omissions, and substitutions required by this Act." It is, then, not for us to read the two Acts together; the King's printer is to be the responsible individual to tell us how this Act is to be read. We shall have no record of that in the Journals of the House; there will be no record of such alterations; and yet that Act, so printed, will be binding and will be produced for all purposes as having the authority of an Act of Parliament. It may be that my noble friend Lord Belper has a precedent for this, but I have it on the highest authority that this provision was put in a Bill some years ago and withdrawn on the ground that it was unconstitutional. I would ask the noble Lord whether it is advisable for us to delegate the power of Parliament to the King's printer. Apart from this criticism, I shall be glad to give every assistance in carrying the Bill, as it contains many Amendments beneficial to workmen.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, with regard to the last point raised I cannot help thinking that my noble and learned friend rather exaggerates the importance of it. There are many precedents for this sub-section as to printing. It was in the Friendly Societies Act, 1887, the Designs and Trade Marks Act, 1888, the Pensioners Computation Act, the Army Annual Act, and other measures. If any question should arise as to a difference between the Act as passed and the Act as printed, that only would avail which had been passed by Parliament and received the Royal Assent. I do not think it likely that any difficulty will arise, the King's printers never having been found to be in default in this respect. If, however, any serious objection is taken to the sub-section in Committee, my noble friend who introduced the Bill will probably not insist upon it.

THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I should like to thank the Lord Chancellor for what he has said. I hope our legal friends will allow us to have amended Acts printed in this manner. It would be impossible to understand them if they were not so printed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): I only rise for the purpose of saying, in answer to the appeal of Lord James of Hereford, that it is not proposed to take the Committee stage of the Bill till after Easter, so as to give ample time for its consideration.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on the second sitting day after the recess at Easter.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (MERTHYR TYDFIL SCHEME CONFIRMATION) BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].

Debate on Amendment moved after Third Reading resumed (according to order).

The said Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

LORD DAVEY explained that he had put Amendments on the Paper with a view to meeting the objections taken on the previous occasion by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack. The first Amendment was to Clause 1, which dealt with frequenting "any street, public park, garden, or sea beach" for the purpose of betting. It proposed to omit the words "public park, garden, or sea beach." The second Amendment proposed to provide that the word "street" should not include "any vacant ground open to the public, common ground not used for the purpose of a racecourse or adjacent thereto, or any space under a railway arch," as stated in the Bill, and that the expression "public place" should include "any public park, garden, or sea beach, and any unenclosed ground to which the public for the time being have unrestricted access." The third Amendment referred to Clause 2, which provided that the Bill should not apply to a racecourse, and its object was to secure that the exemption should only apply to a racecourse for racing with horses.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 5, after the word 'street' to insert the word 'or,' and to leave out from the word 'public' to the word 'on' in line 6 and insert the word 'place.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): So far as I am concerned I assent to all the Amendments standing in the name of my noble and learned friend.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I should like to thank the Lord Chancellor for having met us in the matter. I hope that the arrangement is satisfactory from his point of view, it certainly is so from mine.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 2, line 12, to leave out from the word 'not' to the end of the clause and to insert the words 'and the words "public place" shall include any public park, garden, or sea-beach, and any unenclosed ground to which the public for the time being have unrestricted access.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 17, after the word 'racecourse' to insert the words 'for racing with horses.'"—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

MILITARY WORKS AT ST. LUCIA.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he can now state the total amount which has been spent on barracks, hospitals, and other works in St. Lucia under the War Office or other Departments of the Government. I have to apologise to the noble Earl for giving him the trouble of answering my Question with regard to St. Lucia in two instalments. It is quite true that I wished to know how much money had been spent on St. Lucia during the last three years, but I also wanted to know the whole sum that had been so spent, because it seemed to me that the case was an interesting one and one of very considerable importance. It is only of very recent years that it was determined that great military works were necessary at St. Lucia. They were entered into; many hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent upon them; and then, suddenly, just as they were approaching completion, the whole policy was changed, and these great works were found to be of no use and were abandoned, and it is even admitted that the Government do not see any use to which the buildings can be put in the future. That seemed to me a very serious matter. Of course, it is quite right that when a policy is changed the necessary effect should be given to it; but it does seem curious that the Government should come to a decision to adopt a certain policy, and never at that time have had an idea that possibly the policy would be utterly reversed within ten years. The result is that there has been this heavy expenditure for which the taxpayers get no return whatever. No doubt these instances may be inevitable under certain conditions, but they should be as rare as possible, and when they do take place they should have attention called to them, and the very fullest information should be given as to how they occurred and the reason for them.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, I can assure the noble Lord that his apology for troubling me twice was quite unnecessary. I am always glad to give him information. As far as I can ascertain, the policy of having considerable works at St. Lucia dates from the third Report of Lord Carnarvon's Committee, which was laid before Parliament in 1882. The Committee recommended the adoption of St. Lucia as a coaling station in preference to Port English in Antigua. From 1881 to 1888 I can trace no expenditure on works at St. Lucia. Since 1888, the date of the passing of the Imperial Defence Act, the expenditure at St. Lucia by the War Office has been, roughly, £408,000. I am informed that the Admiralty have spent £9,945, raised partly on the Estimates and partly on loan. The Colonial Office have made no expenditure for Imperial purposes there, though I believe they have spent money for purely Colonial purposes.

GERMANY AND BRITISH TRADERS.

THE EARL OF JERSEY rose "To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps have been taken to correct the action of the German Government against British traders in the Marshall and Caroline groups of islands." He said: My Lords, the subject to which my Question refers is of considerable importance to British trade in the Pacific. Most of the islands in that ocean have been acquired by European Powers. The Marshall and Caroline groups are within the German sphere of influence. In 1886 the declaration between Germany and Great Britain contained these two clauses—

> "That the subjects of either State shall be free to resort to all the possessions or protectorates of the other State in the Western Pacific, and to settle there, and to acquire and to hold all kinds of property, and to engage in all descriptions of trade and professions and agricultural and industrial undertakings, subject to the same conditions and laws, and enjoy the same religious freedom and the same protection and privileges as the subjects of the Sovereign or protecting State."

and, further—

> "That the ships of both States shall in all respects reciprocally enjoy equal treatment as well as most-favoured-nation treatment, and merchandise of whatever origin imported by the subjects of either State, under whatever flag, shall not be liable to any other or higher duties than that imported by the subjects of the other State or of any third Power."

A fine declaration of equality and impartiality of treatment. Under the presumed protection of these clauses Messrs. Burns, Philp & Co., of Sydney, decided to open up a trade with these islands. Before doing so they made inquiries at the German Consulate and were informed that their vessels would be treated the same as German vessels were treated. They despatched a ship, the "Ysabel." On arrival at the Marshall Islands a fee of £225 was demanded for the licence to trade for four weeks. I may state that German ships can trade in our groups of islands for the fee of £100 per annum. Subsequently on the ship's arrival at the Caroline Islands the supercargo was informed that the German company, Jaluit Gesellschaft, had a monopoly except as regards two insignificant islands. So the steamer had to leave without doing any trade.

In August the "Ysabel" went to the Marshall Islands for the second time, and the same heavy fee was asked. Messrs. Burns & Co. then arranged to lease a piece of land from a native chief. The agreement was similar to an agreement made by the same chief with the German company, but the head German official refused to allow Messrs. Burns' agreement to be ratified, though he stated that the German company possessed the right to acquire land. In October a third voyage was made. On the ship's arrival the supercargo was informed that the fee had been doubled from £225 to £450, and the ship returned without trading. Again, in November another voyage was projected, and then the owners were informed that in addition to the doubled licence fee there would be an export tax of thirty marks per ton on all copra. This trip was cancelled. Needless to say, these frustrated attempts to create trade caused loss to a very enterprising British company. I can speak personally of the high position which Messrs. Burns, Philp & Co. have gained as traders, for I know them very well. These are the points, restated. A fee of £225 for four weeks trading as against a fee of £100 for fifty-two weeks charged by Great Britain; then the doubling of the fee and the addition of an export tax; the refusal to allow trade in one group on the score of the monopoly of the German company; the refusal to allow the leasing of land to a British company though it is allowed to a German company; and all these hostile moves in the face of the treaty giving equal rights to the subjects of both countries.

It is not only the loss to one firm which we have to consider. The policy of Germany is significant. It is directed towards the one object of ousting British trade from the Pacific. It is another phase of the same policy which confronts us in China and elsewhere. I have quoted the clauses which give to Great and Greater Britain certain rights. The trade of the Pacific is part of the natural inheritance of our fellow-subjects in the Southern Hemisphere. We are their trustees, and we must take care that no right is sacrificed to or absorbed by other Powers. I feel sure that the noble Marquess will take the matter up, but I should like to impress upon him the absolute necessity of an early decision. The Germans are in favour of delay, because they have shut the door against our traders and at the same time they can trade freely with our islands, so they have nothing to lose. We, on the other hand, run the risk of seeing our rivals secure in their own possessions capturing our trade. My belief is that if matters like this are allowed to drift slowly our fellow-subjects who are keenly interested in the Pacific will have no resource but to consider the necessity of retaliation. I ask the Question standing in my name.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the question to which my noble friend has referred is engaging the close attention of His Majesty's Government. I do not question the accuracy of the statements which he made to the House. In our opinion the treatment received by British trade in these islands is of a very unsatisfactory character. In the Marshall Islands the trade is in the hands of a German company, which, under a contract with the German Government made in 1888, unites the functions of a trading body and those of the Government of the islands. The result of this combination of functions is somewhat singular. The company in its capacity of a trading company is in theory liable to pay the same duties as any other trading company, but when it reappears in its capacity as the Government of the islands it uses the proceeds of these duties to assist its own revenues. When money passes I am given to understand that it is only a transfer, so to speak, from one pocket to the other. This is, in our view, distinctly an evasion of the spirit as well as of the letter of the declaration of 1886, which my noble friend quoted—a declaration under which absolutely equal rights were secured to British and German traders in British and German possessions in the Western Pacific. I think I may say that the whole of the correspondence which took place at the time of that declaration shows that its real intention was to guard against a monopoly of this kind. The Caroline group was bought by Germany from Spain in 1889—that is, after the date of the declaration—and the group lies within the region to which these declarations apply In spite of these facts, I believe it is the case that there has been an absolute prohibition of all but German trade in the group, except in the case of two small islands which are really not worth mentioning at all. Representations have, I need not say, been made to the German Government upon this subject. I am not at this moment able to tell my noble friend anything as to their result, but he may rest assured we shall continue to press upon the attention of the German Government what seems to us a violation of the declaration of 1886.

*Lord STANMORE: My Lords, whilst disclaiming any wish to act as the apologist of the German Government, I think it is only just to point out that German ships going to the Marshall Islands are subjected to exactly the same penalties as English ships. While the conduct of the German authorities may be an evasion of the spirit of the engagement entered into with England, I do not think it is a breach of its letter. Nor do I think it is quite fair to say that the Jaluit Company puts into one pocket what it pays out of another. The company is bound to defray all the expenses of administration, but it has no voice in fixing those expenses, which are imposed entirely at the discretion of the Colonial Office in Berlin. As regards the purchase of land from native chiefs, I would call attention to the fact that we equally prohibit native chiefs from selling land to strangers without a warrant from the British authorities. In that particular I do not think we have reason to complain of the action of the German Government.

The Earl of JERSEY: The agreement for leasing land would have been made with a chief with whom a German company had made an agreement, and on the same terms and, according to the declaration of 1886, the same right of acquiring possessions in the islands was accorded to British and German subjects.

Lord STANMORE: It is, of course, impossible to discuss this matter further here; but my information is rather different from the noble Earl's.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 4th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]; Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 3).

Sir Lewis McIver reported from the Committee on Group No. 3 of Railway

Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Thursday, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

They have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to further extend the periods for the commencement of the construction and for the completion of the tramways, tramroads, and other works, and for the taking of lands authorised by the West Cumberland Electric Tramways Act, 1901; to extend the period limited by The West Cumberland Electric Tramways Act, 1903, within which distributing mains for the supply of electricity were to be laid down; and for other purposes." [West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers upon the Hessle Gas Light and Coke Company." [Hessle Gas Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Constitution of the Trustees of the Clyde Navigation; and for other purposes." [Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords.]

Notices for the Third Reading or consideration of eighteen Private Bills appeared on the Paper, and as each title was called objection was taken by a Nationalist Member, and the Bills were deferred to the following day.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, eleven Bills stood over from yesterday and appear upon the Paper to-day by the order of the House. I beg to call your attention to the fact that the Standing Order lays down that proposed private business must be divided equally between Government and private Members' time. I understand that all the eleven Bills are to be taken in private Members' time. This would be a breach of the Standing Orders.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The discretion in these cases is given by the Standing Order to the Chairman of Committee of Ways and Means, and if the hon. Member complains of his conduct he can take the usual course.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is there no way of preventing perfectly captious objections?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Order, order; take the Chair yourself!

***Mr. SPEAKER**: I hope the hon. Member will not persist in these interruptions; they are most disorderly. The hon. Member asked me a perfectly proper Question. I am not aware of any mode in which I can interfere, and I am not the judge of whether objections are captious or not.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Hear, hear! That is all I want.

The following were the Bills objected to—

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill. To be read the third time To-morrow.

Accrington Corporation Bill (by Order); Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill (by Order); Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill (by Order); South Suburban Gas Bill (by Order); Wrexham Gas Bill (by Order). Third Reading deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting).

Acton Sewage Bill (by Order); Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill (by Order). Consideration, as amended, deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting).

Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill (by Order) [not amended]. Consideration deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting).

Otley Improvement Bill (changed from "Otley Gas and Improvement Bill") (by Order); Seaham Gas Bill (by Order); Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill (by Order). Consideration, as amended, deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting).

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from Liverpool, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Aberdeen (two); Innellan; and Macduff; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Lancashire and Cheshire, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Durham; Newlyn; Sancreed; and Walthamstow; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Erdington; and Ruskington; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR TAX.

Petition from York, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

WYER, THOMAS ROLAND.

Petition of Thomas Roland Wyer, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896 (GRANTS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return presented, relative thereto, [ordered March 16th; *Mr. Jesse Collings*]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS)

Copy presented, of Report No. 30 (Pitcairn Island, by Mr. R. I. Simons) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Railway and Transit Facilities in the Sneem District—Withdrawal of Clyde Shipping Company.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he state whether any agreement was entered into between the Clyde Shipping Company, the Russell Steamer Company, and the Great Southern and Western Railway, or between any two of them, previous to the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company from the south-west coast service; if so, was the Congested Districts Board aware of the nature of this agreement; is he aware that all the new rates quoted for Sneem by the railway company are in excess of those previously quoted by the Clyde Shipping Company, and in the case of some classes of goods show an increase of from 20 to 50 per cent., as, for example, in the case of timber, petroleum, and cement; whether his attention has been called to the inadequacy of the proposed service of carts from Kenmare, seeing that the Clyde Shipping Company used to carry fifteen tons per week on an average to Sneem; and whether he proposes to secure that the railway rates will be reduced in such a way that no additional charge will fall on the people of the Sneem district in consequence of the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Board have no knowledge of any such agreement. It is the case that the railway rates are higher than the steamer rates were, but this is almost invariably the case. The Board understand that, even while the subsidy to the Clyde Shipping Company was being paid by them, many Sneem traders, being dissatisfied with the irregularity of delivery and the absence of storage, had their goods conveyed by rail to Kenmare and carted them thence at their own expense. The Board have now secured from the railway company through rates, with a regular delivery and storage at Sneem, at a great reduction on the former railway rates. There has been no time, as yet, to test the adequacy of the service of carts. I do not see that the railway company can properly be further pressed in the matter.

British Supreme Court at Shanghai—Title of "Chief Justice."

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for what reason the title of Chief Justice has been taken away from the Judge at the head of the British Supreme Court at Shanghai; and whether, in view of the importance attached to the title by British residents in China, the former appellation can be restored.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to the Member for the Barnsley Division of Yorkshire on the 23rd † ultimo.

Rates and Expenditure of London Local Authorities.

Mr. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will grant a Return showing, since 1895, the total amount of money expended and the rate in the pound raised for all county purposes, including education, in the county of London, and for all local purposes by vestries and borough councils, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The following statement containing particulars extracted from the published Local Taxation Returns will, I hope, give my hon. friend the information he desires :—

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 952.

	Year.							
	1895–6.	1896–7.	1897–8.	1898–9.	1899–1900.	1900–1901.	1901–2.	1902–3.
Expenditure.	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
London County Council (excluding capital expenditure and loans to other local authorities) - -	*†2,450,822	*†2,521,231	*†2,597,408	*†3,377,470	*†3,832,786	*†4,153,663	*†4,274,288	*†4,575,077
London School Board (excluding capital expenditure) - - - -	2,208,640	2,355,828	2,419,364	2,545,192	2,698,351	2,828,502	3,003,976	3,136,634
Metropolitan Vestries and District Boards ‡ and Metropolitan Borough Councils (excluding expenditure out of loans and payments under precept to other local authorities)	2,657,948	2,847,212	3,096,257	3,244,255	3,485,155	4,010,403	4,316,044	4,644,797
Average rate in the £ of rates raised for the purposes of—	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
London County Council	1 2·9	1 2·9	1 1·8	1 1·8	1 1·3	1 2·3	1 3·0	1 3·3
London School Board -	10·3	1 0·1	1 0·9	11·7	1 0 9	1 1·7	1 2·4	1 2·7
Metropolitan Vestries and District Boards ‡ - -	§1 5·9	§1 6·0	§1 6·6	§1 6·2	§1 7·0	§1 7·7	—	—
Metropolitan Borough Councils - - -	—	—	—	—	—		1 10·5	2 0·1

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* Excluding in 1895–6, £231,061 ; in 1896–7, £238,572 ; in 1897–8, £246,919 ; in 1898–9, £250,803 ; in 1899–1900, £253,815; in 1900–1901, £256,507 ; in 1901–2, £269,427 ; and in 1902–3, £273,931, distributed by the London County Council to sanitary authorities in London, under the London (Equalisation of Rates) Act, 1894. The expenditure in respect of these sums is included in the statement under the heading Metropolitan Vestries and District Boards, etc.

† Excluding for the years 1895–6 to 1897–8 sums transferred by the London County Council to their Consolidated Loans Fund. Such sums are, for 1898–9 and later years, included in the statement. They amounted in the year 1898–9 to £588,320.

‡ Including the Woolwich Local Board of Health.

§ Excluding, for the years 1895–6 to 1900–1, the average rates in the pound of rates raised under the Burial Acts, the Baths and Washhouses Acts, and the Public Libraries Acts,

Danger of Fire from Explosions caused by Electrical Mains.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a recent action against the Corporation of Manchester in which the plaintiffs succeeded in recovering damages for losses sustained through a fire caused by an explosion in one of the corporation's electrical mains; and, seeing that the plaintiffs based their claim on the ground that the linking-up system laid down in the streets of Manchester causes a difficulty in localising leakage and constituted a public danger, will he state whether this system is generally adopted in London, and whether any improved system has received the consideration of the Board of Trade.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Yes, Sir, the attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the action referred to by the hon. Member. An improved system in which the mains are separated into sections connected by suitable fuses, and whereby the difficulty in localising leakage and consequent risk are much reduced, has received the consideration of the Board of Trade, and has been adopted in all undertakings established during the last two years in London and elsewhere. I also understand that the improved system has been applied voluntarily to many existing undertakings in London.

Repair of Cable between Tory Island and the Mainland.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the telegraphic cable connecting Tory Island with the mainland of county Donegal was broken or injured during the past winter; and that this cable when in use affords the only means of communication with the mainland during stormy weather when the small boats of the islanders cannot venture out; and whether, in view of the danger both of the outbreak of epidemic sickness, and of the exhaustion of provisions during prolonged rough weather, he can promise that the cable will be repaired at an early date.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am sorry that it has not been possible to undertake the repair of the cable to Tory Island during the winter months. In the meantime a suggestion has been made that communication should be established by means of wireless telegraphy, and I hope to arrive at a decision at an early date.

Loss of the "Khyber"—Telegraphic Communication between Lighthouses and the Shore.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, in the Board of Trade inquiry into the loss of the "Khyber," information will be obtained from the keepers of the Wolf, or other lighthouses in the neighbourhood, if the lights of the ship, or signals from her, were seen on the night preceding the wreck; and, if so, whether early steps will be taken to provide telegraphic communication with the shore to obviate the recurrence of similar disasters.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Yes, Sir, steps have already been taken by the Board of Trade with a view to obtaining the evidence of the keepers of the Wolf and Longships lighthouses, who were on duty at the time of the recent wreck of the "Khyber." With regard to the latter part of the Question, I can only refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to a similar inquiry on the 27th March†.

Regulations for the Sale of Poisons—Amendment of the Law.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the frequency of suicides by poison, and loss of life through the administration of poison by misadventure, will he state whether the Government still propose to amend the law regulating the sale of poisons; and, if so, whether there is any probability of a Bill being introduced by the Government this session.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I fear that on this subject I cannot add anything to the reply which

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 1175.

I gave to the hon. Member on March 13th† last.

Postal Officials and Licensing Petitions.

Mr. BUCHANAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is permissible for any one in the postal service in the course of the performance of his duties to ask for signatures to a petition for the granting of a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The action described by the hon. Member would be very irregular, and I shall be glad if he will furnish me with particulars of any such case.

Return of Burgh Charities (Scotland).

Mr. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is in a position to supplement the Return already promised by him of Parochial Charities in Scotland by including in it Burgh Charities.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Secretary for Scotland is prepared to supplement the Return to the extent proposed by the right hon. Member.

Completion of New Buildings for Victoria and Albert Museum.

Mr. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he can say when the new buildings of the Victoria and Albert Museum in Cromwell Road are likely to be finished, and if efforts will be made to have them completed before the close of the present year; when will the new wing of the Museum in Imperial Institute Road be opened, and how soon can the temporary sheds which are now used for the purposes of the Museum between Prince's Gate and Queen's Gate be dispensed with.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The contract for the building of the Victoria and Albert Museum is to be finished in February, 1907. It is impossible to hasten the completion. Hon. Members are perhaps not aware that the foundation stone was laid by Her late Majesty's desire at a date considerably earlier than the works could be begun; hence much apparent delay. As regards the Royal College of Science in Imperial Institute Road, the building cannot be ready for occupation before the spring of next year. None of the temporary sheds can be vacated until then at the earliest.

Suggested Laying out as Public Garden of Ground in front of Victoria and Albert Museum.

Mr. COGHILL: To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether the Board of Works will consider the advisability of laying out all the unoccupied portions of the area between Prince's Gate, on the West; Queen's Gate, on the East; and Prince Consort Road, on the North, as a public garden, as no other use has for a long time been made of it.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The land to which my hon. friend appears to refer is situate on the south side of Prince Consort Road, and is believed to be the property of the Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851. The First Commissioner does not know of any other unoccupied area in this vicinity which could be available for a garden.

Conversion of Gas Lamps in Palace Yard and Speaker's Court into Incandescent Lamps.

Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, what would be the cost of converting the twelve gas lamps in Palace Yard and Speaker's Court, which give the minimum of light, into incandescent lamps of the type with which all the other lamps in Palace Yard are equipped.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) Conversion means new lanterns in each case, and the cost per lamp has hitherto averaged £10; the total cost would therefore be £120.

Sale of Disused Warships in Foreign Countries.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty in what foreign countries the "Porpoise," "Sandfly," "Lizard," and "Havannah" have been sold by tender; whether tenders were publicly invited for the purchase of these vessels; whether they have been sold to be broken up; and, if so, what steps are taken to secure compliance with this condition.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 1204.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The "Porpoise." "Sandfly," and "Lizard" were sold at Bombay, Malta, and Sydney respectively. The sale of the "Porpoise" and "Sandfly" was advertised in the public Press, and the purchaser of the former vessel was bound with two substantial sureties in a sum equal to the amount of the purchase money to break her up within one year. In the case of the "Sandfly," a statutory declaration was obtained from the purchaser that she would be broken up and not sold to a belligerent. Particulars of the sale of the "Lizard" are not yet to hand by mail. As regards the "Havannah," this vessel was sold by public auction at Portsmouth, and as she was not afloat, but high and dry and forming part of a street in Cardiff, she will presumably have to be broken up before she can be removed. The land on which she rested has to be cleared of all debris within a certain time.

Pacific Cable Loan and Public Buildings Expenses Acts Annuities.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury for what term annuities created for the purpose of repayment of the Pacific Cable Loan, under the Act of 1901, run; and whether any annuities for repayment of advances under the Public Buildings Expenses Acts of 1903 have been created; and, if so, for what term.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The annuity under the Pacific Cable Act is for a term of fifty years (Civil Service Estimates, page 464). Two annuities have been created under The Public Buildings Expenses Act, 1903, each being for a term of twenty-nine years (Civil Service Estimates, page 45).

Increase of British Troops for India.

Mr. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India has asked for an increase of the British troops permanently stationed in India; what is the increased number of troops asked for; and has this request been agreed to by the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The question of the addition of certain units to complete the Field Army in India for mobilisation has been raised by the Indian Government, but the details are still under consideration.

Irish Local Government Accounts—Printing as a Public Work.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the auditor of the accounts of the Kerry County Council maintained that printing was a public work; and whether, in view of the fact that this question of printing affects the whole of Ireland, the Local Government Board have been advised that printing is, or is not, a public work.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am informed that the auditor treated the printing contract as a public work within the application of Section 18 of the Local Government Act, 1902, and I understand that the King's Bench Division recently decided in favour of that view.

Rent Reductions in County Kildare.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the percentage of reduction for the nine months ending December 31st last in the county of Kildare on rents fixed for second statutory term.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The percentage of reduction was 12·36.

Strength of Royal Irish Constabulary in County Mayo.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the strength at which the Royal Irish Constabulary has been maintained annually in the county of Mayo from 1899 to 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The average actual strength of the free force was as follows:—In 1899, 465; in 1900, 478; in 1901, 490; in 1902, 472; in 1903, 468. In addition, there was in 1899 and part of 1900 an extra force of fifty men, of the cost of which the county paid as moiety.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants—Case of John O'Driscoll.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from the evicted tenant John O'Driscoll, on the Hegarty Estate, Coolcogher, Banteer, county Cork, to be reinstated on his holding, which is now untenanted; whether the Estates Commissioners are aware that the landlady has assigned the said holding to her son J. J. Hegarty; and, if so, what steps the Commissioners propose to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) An application has been received from John O'Driscoll, claiming reinstatement as the representative of T. D. O'Driscoll. The Commissioners have made inquiries and have been informed that T. D. O'Driscoll was not an evicted tenant, but that he surrendered the holding for a monetary consideration, and that the owner's husband expended over £3,000 on the holding on resuming possession.

Construction of Pier at Falchorrib, County Donegal.

MR. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a sum of £1,000 was provisionally allocated by the Irish Government (in agreement with the county council of Donegal) for the construction of a small pier at Falchorrib, county Donegal, and that the sum has been found insufficient; and whether he will recommend the addition, out of the unexpended balance of the Marine Works Act, of such money as may be required to carry out the work in a satisfactory manner.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The facts are as stated. It has been ascertained that works at Falchorrib, to be effective, would cost a sum greatly in excess of that mentioned. I am unable, as at present advised, to give any undertaking in the matter.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Clothing—Sale of Surplus Stores.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will say what was the sum realised per suit for the suits for discharged soldiers which have been sold; what is the sum usually paid per suit for such suits; and what would have been the cost of storing such suits, if warehouse room had been hired, instead of selling them.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): As the House has been already informed, the prices realised per suit were 5s. 6d. for the first 10,000 and 5s. 7½d. for the second 10,000. The cost price was 11s. 9d. It is estimated that the hire of storage would have amounted to £100 a year, but owing to the special sizes of the suits concerned the issues would have been small and the hiring would have lasted for many years.

Army Contracts—H. Lotery & Co.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether the firm of H. Lotery and Co. hold any Government contracts; whether the tender forms have a labour schedule of prices; and whether these prices are being paid.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: This firm holds a Government contract. The tender form does not contain a labour schedule of prices. The usual wages clause is included in the contract under which the firm is bound to pay the wages generally accepted as current for competent workmen in the district where the work is carried out.

Wormwood Scrubbs Rifle Range.

MR. BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the rifle range at Wormwood Scrubbs has been permanently closed; and, if so, will he explain why; and whether, in view of the expenditure incurred in making the ranges safe and the loss of employment to persons in the neighbourhood, he will consider the advisability of using the rifle butts at the east end of the common, avoiding the proximity to the prison, particularly in view of the difficulty which exists in establishing rifle ranges in the metropolitan area.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: This range will be kept closed until some means can be found for securing real protection from danger. It was found that many bullets had fallen into the prison enclosure near the range, and, therefore, presumably into the open space behind the range, which is open to the public. In view of this danger it would not appear advisable to take the course suggested by my hon. friend. I am fully aware of the great inconvenience caused by the closing of the range, but I can assure the House that every endeavour will be taken to discover such means of protection as will enable it to be re-opened.

The Transvaal.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table the Report of the Colonial Secretary for the Transvaal for 1904

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington): The Report shall be laid.

Mr. WHITLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table the last Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Transvaal.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I will consider whether this can be included among the other Papers which will be laid. Meanwhile I will cause a copy to be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. WHITLEY: These Papers have been circulated in the Transvaal. When may we expect them?

Mr. LYTTELTON: A copy will be laid in the Library at once. I hope the Blue-book will be out before Easter.

Inspector-General of the King's African Rifles.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state by whom the suggestions for the reorganisation of the King's African Rifles were made; and whether the same involves an increase to the salary and travelling allowances of the Inspector-General.

Mr. LYTTELTON: The reorganisation of the King's African Rifles was carried out on the recommendation of the Inspector-General of that force. The increase in the salary and travelling allowances of the Inspector-General, recently approved by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury on the recommendation of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has no connection with the reorganisation scheme.

Transvaal Constitution.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when he will be in a position to lay upon the Table the Letters Patent dealing with the Constitution of the Transvaal.

Mr. LYTTELTON: The Letters Patent and the despatch accompanying them will, in the ordinary course, reach South Africa on or about April 22nd, and will be published in the Transvaal as soon as possible after that date. I propose to lay them here at the same time as they are published there.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Are we to know nothing about this before the Easter vacation?

Mr. LYTTELTON: If the hon. Member likes to spend part of his Easter vacation in the perusal of these documents he will no doubt have an opportunity of doing so.

Zionist Settlement in Africa.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies by whom the expenses of the Commission sent out to report on the tract of country offered by the British Government for the purpose of a Zionist settlement have been defrayed; if it is proposed to send an effective expedition against the Mahdi, as recommended by the Commission; and by whom the expenses of such an expedition will be paid.

MR. LYTTELTON: The Commission to which the hon. Member refers is, no doubt, that sent out by the Executive Committee of the Conference of Zionists. I am not aware by whom its expenses are defrayed. I have no information concerning any recommendations which the Commission may have made.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Are we to understand that, at any rate, this country will not pay the expense?

MR. LYTTELTON: Of that the hon. Member may rest assured.

Cheap Mattresses—Insanitary Flock.

MR. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the alleged insanitary condition of certain cheaper kinds of flock used in the manufacture of cheap mattresses; if so, whether he proposes to take any steps, by initiating legislation or otherwise, to mitigate this alleged evil.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): My attention has been drawn to this question, and reports have been received from the district inspectors of factories, which are now under consideration. The reports go to show that the general conditions of employment in this industry have improved in recent years, though the conditions are still far from satisfactory in many cases. The Home Office is only concerned with the matter in so far as the health of the workers engaged in the industry may be affected, and I shall be prepared to make use of the powers which are given me by the Factory Act for the protection of the workers in places where insanitary conditions prevail. Any measures, however, which may be required for preventing the spread of infection generally would be a subject for the consideration of the Departments concerned with the public health.

MR. FULLER: Will the right hon. Gentleman initiate the fresh legislation which he declares to be necessary?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I do not think I said it was necessary, but that the subject was one for the Departments charged with the duty of looking after the public health.

Metropolitan Police—Linguistic Attainments.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether members of the Metropolitan Police learn foreign languages at their own expense, or whether they receive any allowance in money, time, or advantages in the matter of promotion for so doing; and, in the event of any expense being incurred by the State in the matter, whether he will state the amount expended on such teaching during each of the last ten years.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Members of the Metropolitan Police Force receive no allowance in any form for learning foreign languages. A few months ago, however, I sanctioned the expenditure of a small sum in prizes to officers who attain proficiency in Yiddish.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) inquired whether officers in the Navy were not granted three months leave in which to learn a foreign language and extra pay when they attained efficiency therein.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am aware of that.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Why not do it with the police?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The matter there is somewhat different. It would have to apply to men as well as officers. I will consider if anything can be done, however, in this direction.

Transfer of Duties from the Treasury to the Local Government Board.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a Return will be presented setting out the material parts of the enactments contained in, applied by, or incorporated with the Baths and Washhouses Acts, 1846 to 1899, or the Burial Acts, 1852 to 1900, as respects dealings with property, loans, and matters connected therewith, proposed to be transferred from the Local Government Board to the Treasury, under the provisions of the Bill introduced on March 7th.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): The hon. Member would appear to be under some misconception as to the object of the Bill referred to, which is to transfer certain functions, still remaining rather anomalously with the Treasury, to the Local Government Board, the Department properly responsible in matters connected with local authorities. To elucidate the question, I am giving directions for a Memorandum to be issued, which, I think, will give the information desired by the hon. Member in a form most convenient to the House.

Treatment of Habitual Criminals and Paupers in Scotland.

Mr. CHARLES DOUGLAS: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether His Majesty's Government will appoint a Committee, consisting of representatives of the Government Departments concerned and of local authorities in Scotland, to consider and report upon the treatment of habitual crime and pauperism.

*The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): I would remind the hon. Member that such an inquiry, on a wide reference, was very fully carried out in 1894 by a Committee presided over by Sir Charles Cameron. I doubt whether there is sufficient reason for reopening the whole question; but His Majesty's Government will be glad to consider any proposal regarding particular aspects of it which the hon. Member may wish to make.

Irish Constabulary and Prisoners.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Kilkenny, I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the remarks made by the Lord Chief Baron at the Derry Assizes on March 20th, to the effect that he knew that the Constabulary were instructed by the Government to ask questions of a prisoner, and that he would not allow that as evidence, and that he considered it as illegal that the police were obliged to ask these questions, but he was obliged to carry out what he considered was the law of the land; and whether, in view of this judicial pronouncement upon the practice, the Government will issue orders that it shall be forthwith discontinued.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. James Campbell, Dublin University): May I be allowed to answer this for my right hon. friend? My attention has been called to a newspaper report. I have no means of knowing whether it is accurate or not, but it would appear to me that it must be inaccurate, inasmuch as the police, so far from being instructed to ask questions of prisoners, are expressly directed not to do so. The words of the direction are: "The Constabulary are rigidly enjoined not to converse with their prisoners or question them with respect to the offences with which they may be charged."

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Did you get information from the Lord Chief Baron?

Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL: I have no information except that obtained by reference to the newspapers.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will you ask the Lord Chief Baron if he used this language?

[No Answer was returned.]

Pole Carew and Butler Estate, County Cork.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that immediately subsequent to the purchase agreement on the agricultural portion of Pole Carew and Butler Estate, Banteer, county Cork, similar agreements were signed by the inhabitants of the village for the purchase of their houses; and that within the past week an official of the Estates Commission visited the place and informed the village occupiers that their purchase agreements are to be set aside and they must revert to the old terms of tenancy; and, if so, will he say if this inspector has acted with the knowledge and sanction of the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, what explanation can the Commissioners give for not adhering to the purchase system in this case.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to this Question on Monday† last. Until the report of the inspector has been received the Commissioners will not be in a position to reply to these inquiries.

MR. FLYNN: When may we expect the report? Were the tenants told that if they were prepared to pay the purchase money in cash the sale would be sanctioned?

MR. WALTER LONG: I must have notice of the latter Question. The former I cannot possibly reply to.

Kerry County Council Audit.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the auditor, Mr. Cyril Browne, in his report to the Kerry County Council certified that the accounts of the county council were submitted by the accountant with such neatness and accuracy as to materially facilitate the business of the audit; and whether, in view of the reports of previous auditors as to the secretary's work, and that Mr. Cyril Browne has stated that the secretary of the county council was a very capable officer, he will explain why Mr. Browne has acted in the partisan manner in which he did in his report.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. But the report contains no observations adverse to the secretary, nor is it of a partisan character as suggested.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the auditor of the accounts of the Kerry County Council did not object to or criticise in his Report the manner in which the Limerick and Kerry Railway money was credited in the accounts and estimates, though it involved the apportionment of a sum of £33,000; and, if so, will he say whether the auditor, if he had any objection to make to the manner in which this money, or any portion thereof, was credited, should have informed the county council instead of making a private objection to the Local Government Board; whether this private report was made before or after the date of the auditor's public report; and whether this auditor had any and, if any, what previous experience of county council accounts.

MR. WALTER LONG: It is a fact that the auditor communicated with the Local Government Board on this subject prior to the date of his public report, but the latter alone concerns the county council and the public. The auditor had no previous experience of county council accounts, but had considerable experience in the audit of accounts of other public bodies.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman state exactly what previous experience this auditor had?

MR. WALTER LONG: Obviously I cannot state exactly.

Kerry County Council Printing Contract.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the evidence in connection with the printing contract, as contained in the sworn affidavit of the Kerry County Council's secretary, which showed the reductions effected in the cost of printing and advertising throughout the county by the recent competition, and the evidence of the editor of the *Kerry Post* that he was a member of a former combination, and that recent competition broke this combination and greatly reduced the prices for printing and advertising, was received and considered by the auditor at his recent audit, seeing that the auditor made a report on the contract; and, if considered, will he say why no reference was made to this evidence in support of the county council by the auditor in his published report; and whether he forwarded this evidence to the Local Government Board.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 1208.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The auditor decided in favour of the county council, and there was therefore no reason for him to set out in detail the evidence upon which his decision was based.

Dublin Cab and Car Regulations.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the full amount of fines inflicted on cab and car owners and drivers of hackney cars plying for hire in the city of Dublin, for the year ending February 28th, 1905; whether these fines are appropriated by the police in addition to the rate of 8d. in the £; by what authority the Commissioner pays for policemen travelling on tramcars, and on what occasions they are supposed to do so; whether such policemen are stationed in or on the trams for the purpose of catching car drivers who are over the number allowed on the hazards; and whether the police exhibit any pass or ticket when travelling on such trams.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The amount was £151 8s. 6d. Fines so imposed are payable to the police account, as appropriations in aid of the Vote, under the authority of statute. The police travel on tramway cars, in accordance with the service regulations, when their duty requires them to do so, and they occasionally use such cars for the detection of offences. The fare is paid in the usual manner.

Baldoyle Races—Overcrowding of Trams and Hackney Cars.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several drivers of hackney cars were summoned by the police for overcrowding on the occasion of the Baldoyle Races on St. Patrick's Day; will he say whether any prosecutions have been instituted against the drivers of tramway cars on the same occasion; and whether he will instruct the police to deal in an equal manner with all offenders who may overcrowd their vehicles.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No prosecutions have been instituted for the overcrowding either of hackney cars or of tramway cars on the occasion mentioned. The police deal impartially with all offences against the law, and no instructions are required of the nature suggested in the Question.

Kerry Evicted Farms.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the Congested Districts Board purchased the two evicted farms at Cragg and Ardcrone, county Kerry; what amounts they paid for these farms; what use the lands have been put to by the Board since the date of purchase; and what action the Board intends to take in connection with these farms in the future.

Mr. WALTER LONG: In November, 1903, the Board bought the tenant purchasers' interests in these farms for £300, and in March, 1905, they paid off the Land Commission annuity by a payment of £2,793 10s. The Board have used the lands for grazing cattle, and they intend to dispose of them to landholders to be migrated from the congested districts of the county.

Shinrone National School—Instruction in Irish.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Reverend P. O'Halloran, having taught Irish as an extra subject in the Shinrone National School, presented his class for examination on August 9th, 1904; that twenty-four of the pupils successfully passed the examination; and that the Commissioners of National Education on September 17th refused to pay any fees on the ground that the teacher was a clergyman; and can he state on what rule this decision was based.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The manager of this school was informed by the Commissioners that payment to a clergyman for giving instruction in extra branches could not be allowed. Classes in extra subjects must be open to pupils of all denominations, and instruction by a clergyman would be calculated to confine the attendance to pupils of a given denomination. Under Rule 74 no clergyman can be recognised as the teacher of a day national school.

Irish Agricultural Department.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will furnish a Return showing the names and salaries of the temporary clerks transferred to the Irish Agricultural Department at its inception, giving their present positions and salaries; and a similar Return in reference to the temporary clerks appointed to that Department since its establishment.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Return will be prepared and forwarded to the hon. Member. It is not, however, considered to be of sufficient public importance to lay on the Table as a Parliamentary Paper.

Music Teaching in Irish Schools.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Kilkenny, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that some five years ago, under the scheme of improved technical education for the youth of Ireland, four assistant musical organisers were officially appointed to give Irish teachers and children musical instruction in sessions of not more than a month; and that the Treasury now declines to continue these organisers because of the cost; and, if so, whether, in view of the success of this instruction and of the resolutions of the Commissioners of National Education, the Catholic Hierarchy, and the Synod of the Episcopalian Church, requesting a continuance of the system, he will take steps to induce the Treasury to reconsider their decision and continue the appointment of Irish musical organisers as before.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Temporary organisers in music were employed for a definite term of five years, which expired on March 31st. An inspector of music has now been permanently appointed. It is not proposed to reopen the question.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the popular taste for and need for instruction by the teachers in music, he will request the Commissioners to retain the services of the organiser of instruction in that subject.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The appointment of a permanent inspector of music has been approved. The term for which the temporary organisers in that subject were employed expired on March 31st, and it is not intended to renew their appointments.

Transit Facilities in the Sneem District.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he state whether any agreement was entered into between the Clyde Shipping Company, the Russell Steamer Company, and the Great Southern and Western Railway, or between any two of them, previous to the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company from the south-west coast service; if so, was the Congested Districts Board aware of the nature of this agreement; is he aware that all the new rates quoted for Sneem by the railway company are in excess of those previously quoted by the Clyde Shipping Company, and in the case of some classes of goods show an increase of from 20 to 50 per cent., as, for example, in the case of timber, petroleum, and cement; whether his attention has been called to the inadequacy of the proposed service of carts from Kenmare, seeing that the Clyde Shipping Company used to carry fifteen tons per week on an average to Sneem; and whether he proposes to secure that the railway rates will be reduced in such a way that no additional charge will fall on the people of the Sneem district in consequence of the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company.

MR. WALTER LONG: A reply to this Question cannot conveniently be given within the compass of an oral Answer, and, with the hon. Member's permission, I will circulate my reply to it with to-night's Votes.

Sir J. N. Humble's Estate, Waterford.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an originating application has yet been lodged with the Estates Commissioners with regard to the estate of Sir J. Nugent Humble, in the county of Waterford; whether the attention of the Commissioners has been already directed to the fact that many of the holdings proposed to be sold to new tenants are holdings from which other tenants have been evicted within the past twenty-five years; whether the Estates Commissioners will enter into negotiations with the new tenants with a view to the reinstatement of the former tenants; whether they are aware that an area of untenanted land is in the occupation of Sir J. Nugent Humble, the vendor, or of his brother, Mr. Charles Humble, on his behalf; and whether they will make the sale of this land to them, in view of all the circumstances, a condition of their declaring the holdings now proposed to be sold by the vendor to be an estate.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; and the Commissioners cannot express an opinion on the matters mentioned in the Question until the estate is fully before them.

Mountmellick Petty Sessions Clerk.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sergeant Fitzsimons still continues to act as Petty Sessions Clerk at Mountmellick; and, if so, whether he will state what extra remuneration he is receiving for this work over and above his ordinary pay, and who is discharging his duties as police sergeant.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. The question whether the sergeant is to receive extra remuneration will not be decided until the case of the suspended clerk has been dealt with. The sergeant continues to discharge his police duties.

MR. DELANY: Can the sergeant act both as clerk and as prosecutor?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have an Answer to that Question later on.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that a petty sessions clerk is debarred by statute from acting as prosecutor in the Court with which he is officially connected, and that Sergeant Fitzsimons is invariably prosecutor at the Mountmellick Petty Sessions Court, he will see that some other person is appointed to the position of acting clerk to that Court.

MR. WALTER LONG: A petty sessions clerk is not debarred by statute from acting as prosecutor in the Court of which he is clerk. Instructions, however, have been issued that the sergeant is not again to act as prosecutor while temporarily employed as clerk. He has prosecuted in one case only since he has been so employed.

Cattle Houghing near Athenry.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 24th March some cattle belonging to Mr. Murphy, of Gloves, near Athenry, were houghed, and others had their tails cut off; whether he has any official information as to the cause of this outrage; if any arrests have been made in connection with it; and what steps he has taken or intends to take to enforce the law in this district.

MR. WALTER LONG: On the night of 24th March, sixty-seven cattle, the property of Mr. Murphy and others, were driven off two farms at Gloves, and were found roaming two miles away on the following morning. Three of them were cut on the back — one severely. No cause can at present be assigned for the outrage. No arrests have been made by the police, but they are carefully pursuing their inquiries into the matter. As already stated, I have called for a special report as to the condition of this district, which is engaging my earnest attention.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Were any of these constables on this station ever under the direction of Sergeant Sheridan?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Is it not the fact that not a single policeman was on duty this night, as they were all engaged in a spree in the police barracks?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have no information of that. I should be sorry for my hon. friend to cast such an aspersion on the police unless he had some definite information.

Mr. SLOAN: I, too, should be sorry to do so. I ask for information, but if I give some to the right hon. Gentleman will he inquire.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Certainly.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Did the police after their spree go out after the cattle.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.) asked if a public meeting had not passed a resolution protesting against these slurs on the district.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! These Questions are not in order.

Lambert Estate, Athenry—Destruction of Walls.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that on the night of 24th March the greater part of the walls surrounding the farm of John O'Loughlin, on the Lambert Estate, near Athenry, were levelled to the ground and his cattle driven off; will he say what arrests have been made in connection therewith; and what steps the Government intend to take to enforce the law in this district

Mr. WALTER LONG: A gap about six feet wide was made in the wall of Mr. O'Loughlin's farm, the object being to afford a passage for the cattle which were driven off this farm and the adjoining farm, as mentioned in my reply to the last Question.

Burdett Estate, King's County.

Mr. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Burdett Estate, at Banagher, King's County, consisting of about 400 Irish acres of prime land, at present let to graziers on the eleven months system, is shortly to be sold in order to satisfy various claimants to the property of the late owner; and whether, in view of the number of small uneconomic holdings, most of them upon bog land, that exist in this district, he will recommend the Congested Districts Board to buy in this estate with a view to resale to tenants in need of enlarged holdings.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This estate is not suitable for the purposes of the Board, who do not propose to acquire it.

East Limerick Schools.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether any managers of national schools in East Limerick, within the past few years, have been in treaty with the Commissioners of National Education about obtaining grants for the building of schools, and so far have failed in their efforts; and, if so, will he say what has been the cause of the failure; and when he expects that the Commissioners will be in a position to issue their new code of rules as regards building.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This Question should be addressed to my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury, and I would ask the hon. Member to address him accordingly.

Miss Burton's Estate, near Mungret, County Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, is he aware that negotiations have been in progress for sale to the tenants of the estate of Miss K. J. Burton, situate near Mungret, county Limerick; that a tenant named Michael M'Mahon was some years since evicted off this estate; and that in February last this man, before he could make arrangement for getting back into his holding, made inquiries of the Estates Commissioners as to whether, in case of reinstatement, they could make him a grant to restock his farm; and, if so, will he explain why the Estates Commissioners refuse to make any grant, as the whole estate is about being sold out.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners ascertained from the owner that she was unwilling to sell this particular holding unless the tenants generally should agree to purchase. The question of a grant to an evicted tenant will be considered when the estate upon which he is to be reinstated comes before the Commissioners.

New Education Rule 127 (B)—Munster Protest.

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of the resolutions passed at a meeting of the Munster School Managers Association, held on March 28th, protesting against the proposed new rule of the Board, 127 (B); and whether the Commissioners of National Education will give due consideration to this and other protests from managers and teachers in various parts of Ireland before seeking to put the proposed rule into force.

Mr. WALTER LONG: These resolutions have been received, and will be duly considered by the Commissioners.

Mr. FLYNN: Have not a large number of similar resolutions been passed by public bodies all over the country?

Mr. WALTER LONG: Very likely.

Leonard Estate, Galway.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have purchased the Leonard Estate, Tuam, county Galway, and is it the intention of the Board to divide the fifty-five acres of untenanted land outside the demesne amongst the small tenants in the district; and, if so, will Stephen Joyce, whose farm consists of about eleven acres, and another tenant named John Daly, whose farm consists of about one and a-half acres, be suitably provided for.

Mr. WALTER LONG: This land is untenanted and remote from a congested district. The Board purchased it with the object of exchanging it for land within congested districts in order to relieve congestion. It is not intended to transfer any portion of the land to the persons named.

Mayo and the Marine Works Act.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say when he will be in a position to make a statement in connection with the Mayo schemes under the Marine Works Act of 1902.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Government await a reply to a communication recently addressed to the Midland Great Western Railway Company. I hope soon to be in a position to make a statement in the matter.

Technical Education in Kerry.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Department of Agriculture and the Congested Districts Board have refused to give grants towards the technical education schemes arranged for the congested districts of the county by the Kerry County Council; and whether, seeing that more than half of county Kerry is scheduled as congested, he will state what steps he proposes to take in order to prevent the working of the schemes of technical education being paralysed in these districts.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Department's agricultural scheme applies equally to the entire county, and their scheme of technical instruction is also applicable over congested and non-congested areas. The Congested Districts Board subsidise their own schemes of industrial work in the congested districts, but they have no funds to assist the county scheme of technical instruction in these districts.

Sir Douglas Brooke and his Tenants.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a speech made by Sir Douglas Brooke, Baronet, at an Orange meeting held at Maguiresbridge, in the county of Fermanagh, on March 9th, in which he stated that at the time of Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill he had given out rifles to his Protestant tenantry and had taught some of the Protestants how to shoot these rifles straight, that there were a good many of these rifles still in the country, and some of them in his residence, Colebrooke, and that he would issue them to loyal Orangemen should the necessity to do so arise; and if so, whether, having regard to the position of Sir Douglas Brooke as a justice of the peace and deputy-lieutenant, his language has been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor; and, if so, what explanation, if any, has he given for the use of such language.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Lord Chancellor informs me that he knew nothing about this speech, and does not think it very important to consider what was said in reference to incidents of many years ago, and which may never recur.

Mr. MACVEAGH: But how many of these rifles are in the district? What does he consider about it?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am afraid I am unable to do more than give the House the reply of the Lord Chancellor. I cannot say what he considers.

Return Relating to Government Servants in Ireland.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state if he has any intention of bringing forward the Motion standing in his name to discharge the Order of this House for the Return relating to Government Servants in Ireland; and, if so, on what date.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I regret that I must bring forward the Motion to which the hon. Member refers. I understand that the hon. Member has a Question to the Prime Minister as to the date.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Has the hon. Gentleman used his influence with the Government to get time for the discussion of it?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I can add nothing to my Answer.

Legislation by Reference.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to the growing inconvenience arising out of the system of legislation by reference; and whether, in cases where Government Bills refer to other statutes, the material portions of the statutes so referred to will be set out in a schedule to such Bills.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I quite admit that inconvenience has been caused by legislation by reference to other statutes. I do not believe it will be possible to prevent that system of legislation in view of the time which, in modern conditions, the House takes to deal with controversial matters. I do not think the hon. Gentleman's suggestion is the best way of meeting the difficulty. I imagine that whenever an important Bill is under discussion dealing with any proposed legislation by reference there would be no objection to printing as a Parliamentary Paper the statutes already passed to which reference has been made. That course has been on more than one occasion adopted, and I think we should be ready to adopt it again.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind the convenience of the legal profession and of the general public?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am anxious to consult the convenience of the legal profession.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS: And the public, too?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If they require this information they can only obtain it by the method that I have suggested.

***Mr. GIBSON BOWLES** asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the more material parts of the statutes referred to had been scheduled to the Behring Sea Fisheries Bill with great advantage.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not concerned in that particular case. The plan I have suggested does not differ materially from that suggested by the hon. Gentleman, and it seems, on the whole, to be the more convenient plan.

Agricultural Rating Bill.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the Second Reading of the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill will be taken.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am very anxious to pass the Second Reading of this Bill before the Easter holidays, but no pledge can be given as regards the time until I see what Parliamentary time will be expended on other matters that must be dealt with.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: Will public notice be given before the Bill is introduced.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope it will be taken as sufficient notice if I say that if I possibly can I intend to read this Bill a second time before Easter.

Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory.

Mr. WHITLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what was the date on which the Cabinet decided to suspend the decision of the Army Council to reduce the establishment at Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The question of the Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory as such never came before the Cabinet at all, nor was the Cabinet concerned with the case of particular Government factories. What did come before the Cabinet were certain general questions raised by the factories in the Metropolitan areas, and questions arising out of them. I think it was in reference to that general decision of the Cabinet that the letter to which the hon. Gentleman refers was written and published.

Mr. WHITLEY: When was this larger question decided by the Cabinet?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it was early in February, the first Cabinet we had after the recess. But I cannot be absolutely certain.

Return relating to Government Servants in Ireland.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give a day for the discussion of the Motion standing in the name of the Secretary to the Treasury for the discharge of an Order of this House for a Return relating to Government Servants in Ireland.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot fix a time at present. I hope it will not be very long delayed.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now say approximately when the Government Bill for establishing a Minister of Commerce and Industry, referred to in the King's Speech, will be introduced.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The date is not yet fixed.

Imperial Defence.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any one of His Majesty's Ministers is responsible for advising the Crown as to the general schem of Imperial defence which has been recommended by the Committee of Defence; and, if so, which Minister has that responsibility.

Mr. A. BALFOUR: The Committee of Defence is, as the hon. Gentleman is doubtless aware, a Committee whose duty it is to advise the Cabinet, and it is for the Cabinet, or for the head of the Cabinet, as the case may be, to advise His Majesty in connection with this and other matters.

Mr. BLACK: Is the Prime Minister himself responsible for Imperial defence, and if so, when will he make a statement of his policy?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that is a relevant and a proper Question. I have already said, in answer to the hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, that in my judgment it would be very proper to take an early opportunity of putting down Item E of the Treasury Vote, for which I am responsible, and which raises any question with which the Committee of Imperial Defence is concerned. I think it is desirable that on that Vote I should make a statement to the House. I may remind the hon. Gentleman that I cannot put that Vote down until Mr. Speaker has left the Chair on the Civil Service Estimates. I should like it to come on on an early day after Easter.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of making a statement on the Vote now under the consideration of the Committee of Supply.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the course suggested by the hon. Member a most undesirable one, and one which it is specially desirable to avoid. By putting down this Vote E the larger questions of Imperial defence can really be raised. You cannot discuss them satisfactorily, in my judgment, either on the Navy or the Army Votes, and it was because the House felt that that this other occasion was contrived.

Canada and the Colonial Conference of 1902.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the resolutions which were originally submitted by the Canadian Ministers to the Colonial Conference of 1902, showing how far these were accepted by the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The question of what Papers should be laid on the Table in connection with this Conference was very carefully considered at the time with the advice of the Colonial Prime Ministers. I do not think it would be desirable now to reopen the question, and it certainly could not be reopened without consulting those Prime Ministers again.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Sydney Buxton reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals) Bill: Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. William Abraham, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Francis Sharp Powell, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Sir Harry Samuel, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Parrott, Colonel Blundell, Mr. Joseph Albert Pease, Colonel Sadler, Sir Thomas Wrightson, Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart, and Sir James Heath.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for the better Prevention of Corruption." [Prevention of Corruption Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Married Women's Property Act, 1882." [Married Women's Property Act (1882) Amendment Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for amending the law relating to the Administration of Oaths for the purpose of Proceedings in Prize Courts." [Prize Courts Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to consolidate, with Amendments, the enactments relating to Naval Prize of War. [Naval Prize Bill [Lords.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905–6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): I must apologise to the Committee for intervening now, but I think they will excuse me when I recall the fact that the debate last night was concluded by a very important speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. I think it would be almost discourteous on my part if I were not to attempt, at any rate, to establish some case in reply to that which he put before the Committee last night. I am quite sure it would be most unsatisfactory to me if I were to allow the Committee to accept all the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman and to assume that there was no reply to any of them. I think there is an ample, a sufficient, a complete reply practically to every proposition the right hon. Gentleman advanced. I do not for a moment expect that hon. Members will agree to everything I have written or said, but I do think it is a reasonable proposition that they should make themselves fairly acquainted with the substance of my communications, whether written or spoken. I cannot help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman has been too much occupied to do me this honour. The right hon. Gentleman dealt in the first place with the question of the infantry of the Line. He spoke of the injury that might be done—would be done in his opinion—to the battalions of the Line if any of them were placed on a short-service establishment, and he adduced reasons which led him to take that belief. I want to examine those reasons.

He told the Committee that in the proposals I have laid before the House the battalions of the Line would be compelled to spend no less than eighteen years of their existence in India, and that great medical difficulties would arise by the prolongation of the service of the men in India. He said that the idea of extending the service from seven to nine years was a mistake, that it would infallibly produce certain evil consequences, and that it was therefore to be condemned. I am going to ask the Committee to judge of this matter. I am going to give them the facts as they appear to me and ask them whether the verdict lies with me or with the right hon. Gentleman. In the first place, the idea that any proposal I have ever made to the House involves the retention of the men in India for a longer period than that for which they have hitherto been retained is an entire mistake. I do not suppose the Committee is as familiar with these matters as I am, but the right hon. Gentleman is. He knows perfectly well that under the existing system battalions remain in India fifteen, eighteen, and even as long as twenty years. A battalion has only just returned from India which has been there for over eighteen years. I do not regard that practice with favour. I think it is an unfortunate practice; but to suggest that any alteration which I have ever proposed would either perpetuate or accentuate that practice is an entire mistake. On the contrary, the moment you set the battalions free from the double-battalion system you are in a position materially to abbreviate the period of service abroad. That is not an assertion of my own. It is the result of a calculation made with the greatest care, and the thing is easily explained. If you have a battalion which is dependent merely on a depot, you can remove that battalion as a battalion, from this country to the Colonies, from the Colonies to India, and can bring it back again. When you are sending out, as we do now every successive year, drafts to that battalion, the number of men involves exactly the same amount of transportation as the transportation of the battalion itself, and it has been one of my principal inducements in submitting these proposals to the House that we can institute a system by which a battalion can go from here to India, that it can be removed from India to, say, for instance, the Cape as a battalion, and that it can be brought back on a reduced establishment from the Cape to this country as a battalion, and that by doing so you will greatly reduce the period of Indian service, which is now imposed.

The right hon. Gentleman said we were making a great mistake in departing from the seven years period of service. I do not know whether he was relying upon his recollection or whether he was dwelling on his present knowledge. But I venture to suggest to the Committee that he was absolutely misinformed with regard to this question of seven years service. The proposition is that some revolutionary proposal is being made whereby a longer period of service than seven years is being imposed on the soldier, that the change will involve great disadvantages in health and discipline; and that it will greatly prejudice the chance of the soldier obtaining employment on his discharge. What are the facts? For years past the service of nine out of ten soldiers has been not seven but eight years. At this moment, out of the whole of the Army, no less than 155,000 men are serving for eight years and upwards, as against 111,000 men who are serving for a less period. If it be true that that service of seven years is so detrimental to the Army, we shall have to make revolutionary changes greater than those I have suggested, because—let the Committee mark the figures and then say how they are going to change the matter. Are we to make a break in a practice which has grown up enormously to the advantage of the Army? Who tells us that the Army is any the worse for the fact that 155,000 men, or by far the larger proportion of the Army, are serving for eight years? No one. Does any one tell us that we should alter that system? No. And if the right hon. Gentleman will look at the figures he will find that for one man who is serving seven years there are four men who are serving for eight years. Therefore, I think he was a little behindhand in regard to his knowledge of the actual facts when he was suggesting that we are making a great departure in proposing to establish nine years service.

The right hon. Gentleman, as I understand, is an advocate of a return to the seven and five years period of service. There, again, I want to test his statement. If he is an advocate of such a return, accompanied by a reduction of the number of battalions—because that, I think, is an accepted axiom on the other side of the House—I want something a little more specific. I will tell the right hon. Gentleman, in the first instance, that if you do return to the seven and five years system you will have a Reserve entirely inadequate to your needs. Let us suppose that we adopt the further suggestion and reduce battalions. I do not want them to specify the particular number of battalions which they wish to abolish, though I should like them to throw the handkerchief so that we might know which is to fall. It is, I think, a fair thing to say that this reduction of Regular battalions is the accepted doctrine not only of the Leader of the Opposition——

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I have never said so.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: I sincerely welcome the admission that the right hon. Gentleman does not accept the view that we ought to have a reduction of Line battalions, and I entirely exclude him; but he will not deny that that doctrine has been accepted with alacrity and is being insisted on with great determination by some very influential members of his Party. Now I want to know where you are going to begin. Do the Committee desire to abolish the Gordon Highlanders or the Seaforth Highlanders? Do the Irish Members wish to get rid of the Connaught Rangers? This is the particular application of the doctrine. If you are going further than the reduction of fourteen battalions, I presume you must have some limit to your destructive energies; and I suggest that we should limit it to thirty battalions, including the fourteen of which I have spoken. Are you going to get rid of the Dublin Fusiliers, the 100th Canadian Regiment, the Highland Light Infantry, the North Staffordshire Regiment? I might quote the whole list. That is the whole point.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight): Who proposes it?

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: The hon. member for the Isle of Wight asks who proposes it. That is exactly what I want to get at. I do not propose it; that is quite clear. Either it is proposed or it is not. I was told it was the policy of the Opposition to economise by reducing the Regular Army, and I want to know whether they are serious or not. Let us suppose that we can eliminate the element of controversy, for I think there might be some controversy if you were to propose to abolish the Gordon Highlanders, or some public objection to getting rid of the Highland Light Infantry. I will confine myself to the reduction of fourteen battalions, about whom there has been a certain amount of consensus of opinion. We have 156 battalions of Line infantry in the Army; of those fifty-two are in India and thirty-six are, or shortly will be, after the reduction of one battalion, in the Colonies. Suppose you get rid of fourteen battalions; then, after providing for the existing garrisons of India and the Colonies, you will have fifty-four battalions only for the purpose of relief and reinforcement in case of war. Now, is there any evidence at all, theoretical or practical, that fifty-four battalions, fifty-four units, will satisfy our Imperial needs in time of war? If that be true, all I can say is that it is in direct contradiction to every single scrap of evidence I have ever seen since I took office. I suppose it will not be desired that we should return to the position which was so greatly complained of during the war, when the whole Regular defence of this country was entrusted to eight battalions of the Line. Let us say that you enlarge that number to sixteen. With your sixteen and your fifty-four battalions you will have a very slender measure of reinforcement for the Army of India. But let us go a little further and suppose that, with the hon. Members opposite, you are going to abolish thirty battalions of the Regular Army. What would happen? You would have, in the event of war, for the whole purposes of war, for the reinforcement of your Army in India, your Army in the Colonies, and the defence of the United Kingdom, only thirty-eight battalions of infantry. Is that what the Committee desire? Would they be really content with that result? And that is not the end of it, for the moment you begin to reduce the battalions, you reduce the Reservists of the battalions, and you would reduce them at a very rapid ratio, much more rapid than if the whole of the Army were concentrated in this country. Battalions abroad are not producing a large Reserve; it is the battalions at home; and directly you examine the figures you will find that you will be lamentably and increasingly short of Reserves—not to furnish reinforcements in time of war, but to mobilise your battalions so as to enable them to go to war at all. I think it is fair that the Committee should formulate their opinions upon a problem of that kind; it is the kind of practical problem with which I am trying to deal. I need hardly point out that this will involve the entire destruction of the linked battalions. Personally I regard that, for the purpose of drafting, as a pure advantage, though I am not quite sure that the Leader of the Opposition so regards it. But this is certain—that if you decrease the number of battalions at home and retain the number of battalions abroad, the system of linked battalions for purposes of drafting falls to the ground instantly.

***Sir LEES KNOWLES** (Salford, W.): I am not at all certain that there is a consensus of opinion in the House as to the abolition of the fourteen Line battalions. There is the alternative proposal to reduce the number of men in the battalions from 1,000 to 500, and so to avoid the abolition of the battalions, and the *esprit de corps* attached to them.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: The very next remark I was going to make was in exact continuation of the hon. Member's line of thought. What I suggest to the Committee is that it is a far more profitable operation, if you are going to insist on this reduction, to reduce the battalions to such strength as will enable us to economise while retaining the power of recruiting Reserves and the power of re-creating the battalions in the event of war. You would effect the same economy as if you reduced half the number of battalions, and at the same time you would reserve the *cadres*. The right hon. Gentleman made some remarks on what he alleged to be the shortage of the Reserve under the proposal I have made. I was unable to trace the origin of those remarks; I do not know where he got them from—certainly not from me. I think he suggested that there would be a shortage of some 66,000 men on the Reserve; that is an absolute delusion. There will be no shortage on the Reserve; there will be a surplus on the Reserve. Among the figures I presented to the House I gave a figure of 90,000 men of the infantry Reserve, but it was limited by the conditions which I imposed upon that Reserve. If you were to take the existing Reserve conditions, instead of having 90,000 you would have, under the cheapest terms ever proposed in the British Army, an increased Reserve of 150,000 men. I hope, then, that we have heard the last of this suggestion that the Reserve, even under the conditions I propose, is inadequate.

The right hon. Gentleman suggested that I had made some modification in the views I have suggested to the House in regard to the Militia; but that is a misconception. The right hon. Gentleman is quite right in saying that I have entertained certain views with regard to the Militia, and I confess I entertain them still. I think the Militia ought to be made, and can with great advantage be made, the main, possibly even the sole, future component of our territorial Army. Yes, but I never made that proposal to the House of Commons. I am addressing myself to the charge made against me by the right hon. Gentleman last night, that I had modified in any particular the proposal I had made to the House. I believe I was right at that time in supposing that the scheme, which I confess I still favour, would not have found equal favour in the eyes of the House of Commons, and I never did propose to the House any serious modification of the Militia force. I said then, and I say now, that it was essential to eradicate from the Militia those units which were clearly of no advantage; but at the same time, I have said over and over again that, in deference to what I believed to be the general feeling of the House, I should not propose any substantial alteration in the Militia. The proof of that is to be found in the fact that we have taken for the Militia Vote this year precisely the same sum that we took last year. Therefore it is a little hard that I should be charged with having withdrawn or altered the proposals which I am represented as having made to the House with regard to the Militia.

I noted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that he was in great doubt as to what would be the effect on recruiting for the Militia of the proposal to render the force liable to foreign service. I do not share the doubts of the right hon. Gentleman. I was present at the debate on the Militia Bill in another place, and I heard one Militia officer after another get up and say that this proposal would be regarded as a claim both by officers and men. Still, it will be important to see the result of this proposal, for upon it depends whether or not we can make effective use of the Militia.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman says that there is no change in his mind or in his intention, or in any proposal which he has now submitted to the House, from the original proposal with regard to the Militia which he laid before the House last year. Lord Lansdowne thinks differently, according to the extract from his speech on the Militia Bill which I read to the House last night. I quoted it for this reason. Lord Lansdowne speaks in the name of the Government. We complain that in this House we hear a great deal of what the right hon. Gentleman thinks and desires and wishes, but we do not hear anything at all of what the Government are determined to do. Let me read again what Lord Lansdowne said—

> "We have, then, to consider from that point of view what is the proper place of the Militia, and I am glad to believe that in the opinion of most of us the proper place of the Militia is that it should form a part of that Army which in times of peace remains at home, but which in times of national emergency shall be available for use in the field beyond the limits of these islands. I have no doubt that if my right hon. colleague had these data to work upon he would have been justified in doing what I believe in his original proposal he desired to recommend to Parliament—that he would have preferred

that the Militia should be merged in the short-service Army of which we have spoken in these debates. But sentiment counts for a good deal in these questions, and it became obvious to us that a measure of that kind would have done great violence to the sentiment of a force which we greatly honour and which commands the esteem of the country. Therefore we propose that the Militia should retain its identity and that it should not be merged in the short-service Army, but that, on the other hand, it should be so framed, so equipped, and so officered that it should be fit when occasion arises to take its place alongside the best troops of the Line for the purposes of foreign service."

We have here two contradictory conceptions of the position of the Militia. The first, Lord Lansdowne says, was originally put forward under the authority of the Government by the Secretary of State for War; but they have given that up and adopted a different course. Will the right hon. Gentleman now say that he is one and the same person in this respect as he was last year?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The interpolation of the right hon. Gentleman gives me the opportunity of referring to the Papers with regard to the Militia which I laid before the House. The right hon. Gentleman is mistaken.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not mistaken. It is Lord Lansdowne, if any one.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Lord Lansdowne was quite right. What he said was quite correct.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then it was concealed from us in the House of Commons.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There was never anything more open to this world. I never concealed from this House that it was my desire to have the Militia included in the short-service Army. But I never made the proposal to the House. In the Memorandum which I submitted to the House, I said that a change of the magnitude which I suggested could only come about after a much fuller public discussion than had yet been given to it, and that therefore no sweeping alteration in the Militia was at present contemplated. I never made any other proposal to the House; I have had no reason for withdrawing any proposal which I did make, and Lord Lansdowne has accurately described the position. My hon friend the Member for Portsmouth spoke yesterday about the impossibility of making the Militia a territorial force. That seems to me a paradox. The Militia is essentially the territorial force of the country. If I have received one, I have received numbers of communications from great country towns saying that if we could form these territorial battalions they would place at our disposal all the resources of the locality. If you say they have already done so under the existing Militia arrangement, I say they have not. But I am confident that the moment you start these territorial battalions you will have the whole local feeling and sentiment on their side.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): If you merge the Militia in your new territorial regiments the Militia, as Militia, ceases to exist.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I will tell the hon. Member about his own battalion in Hampshire. That battalion at the present moment is being bled at every point. In that battalion there are 156 men under twenty years of age, and there are 164 men disqualified under existing rules from service at all. The total strength of the battalion is 463 men. Does the hon. Member think that battalion would be better or worse if it were relieved from the pressure it is now under? I will tell the hon. Member exactly what has happened. The recruits of that battalion have been drawn out by the Rifle Brigade, by the Royal Marines, by the stokers of the Royal Navy, and, above all, by the Volunteer corps. Does the hon. Member really think that that battalion would suffer at all if it were made a territorial battalion, and it had not only barracks established in Winchester, but had full access to the traditions and activity of the Army?

MR. REGINALD LUCAS: If the right hon. Gentleman says that we, as battalions, are not worth having, there is nothing more to be said, and we must go, but, if you merge us with territorial regiments, we shall no longer exist as a Militia unit, and all our sentiment, traditions, and *esprit de corps*, as Militia, disappear; we shall be a totally different institution. I do not say this ought not to be done if it is necessary, but do not let us be told it is the same thing.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There never has been any question and there is no intention of merging them in another battalion. I have left the opportunity to a certain number of Militia battalions to accept the responsibility if they desire, and I have ample evidence that apparently I would get battalion after battalion to accept the responsibility proudly.

Let me come for a moment to another item, the question of the Volunteers. The right hon. Gentleman attacked me for quoting certain figures with regard to the Volunteers. I believe that what I have proposed for the Volunteers would lead to an amelioration in their condition which has never been suggested for them, and would put them in a position that has never been approached both for standing and efficiency. In what I said about the internal condition of the force I was but quoting statements of its officers. I said nothing in malice, I exaggerated nothing. All I claim is the right to examine the Volunteers in the light of reason and common sense, just as we examine every other branch of His Majesty's forces.

The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the "blue-water" school and said that he belonged to the "silver-streak" school. Well, if we are liable to be invaded, we must have the kind of troops which will enable us to face the great Continental nations. Will any one suggest that we should reorganise the Volunteer force so that it may be able to meet the troops of those nations? If they had to meet a French, a German, or an Austrian army corps should we really organise our Volunteer forces as we are organising them now? Should we not give them transport, cavalry, guns, training, corresponding to that of the troops against which they were likely to be engaged? I want to know whether we really believe in this theory at all. I do believe in it, though not in the exaggerated form the right hon. Gentleman attributed to me. If hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite do not believe in it let them accept the logical development of their views. There is no half-way house in this matter.

Mr. Reginald Lucas.

I must say I have been impressed by what I must call the uncompromising unreality of this debate. I have taken but a small part in it. I spoke yesterday and I am now endeavouring to reply to the Leader of the Opposition to-day. Therefore, if unreality exists I am not responsible for it. I still feel we are not in contact with the realities of the situation at all. I still think we have had no suggestion from either side of the House.

An HON. MEMBER: It is not for us to make suggestions.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That only proves what I say; but I think it is time the House did suggest——

An HON. MEMBER: You clear out first.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: If they have any suggestions to make. We have not had any one get up and say, "I believe that our Army as at present constituted is fit for the protection of the country in the absence of the Navy; I do believe the training we give them, their organisation, is perfectly satisfactory."

When I state the results of my examination into the condition of our different forces I know it is not popular. It is not agreeable to receive the criticisms of hon. Gentleman on both sides, but I know that is not only my fortune, but will be the fortune of every Minister who stands in this place and ventures to look facts in the face, to test the real fighting value of our arms. The moment you venture to suggest that this or that branch of the Army requires investigation, or demands reform, you are met by an indignant chorus of reproach. I am old enough to remember that there was a certain Marshal Lebœuf in a neighbouring country who told the French people that everything in the French army was ready to the last gaiter-button. It was my fortune to see that country, within a year from the time that statement was made, invaded and devastated by war, and the French people had to pay the price for accepting that statement. I have not the slightest doubt that the Marshal's statement was exceedingly popular. I am certain that the Chamber applauded him loudly. From the personal point of view nothing would be more satisfactory to myself if I were able to state that, according to all the information at my disposal, I am convinced that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. I do not think so; nothing will make me think so. I believe any one in my position will feel it to be his imperative duty to probe into the condition of every branch of our forces, and must be prepared for what I was prepared for, criticism, much of which no doubt is just; but a good deal of which I venture respectfully to say is not only unjust, but uninformed. I would take the opinion of the Committee. I ask if the gravamen of the charge that is laid against me can be sustained; I ask if I have not met the Leader of the Opposition on every single point; and I ask the Committee to say that there is not only a good deal to be said on this side, but that the enormous weight of experience and fact lies on this side.

Major SEELY said he begged to move again the reduction of £1,000,000 moved the previous day by the hon. Member for Oldham, although he was fully aware that his hon. friend the Member for Sheffield was anxious to move a reduction dealing specifically with the Volunteers. He thought it was only right that in setting up this reduction of £1,000,000 some reply should be made to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. In spite of all the lucidity of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War they did not know what the right hon. Gentleman was driving at. He was not going to follow the right hon. Gentleman through all the various parts of his speech in reply to the Leader of the Opposition; but he would only take three heads so as to show the right hon. Gentleman the difficulty the Committee found in trying to understand what he intended to propose. The right hon. Gentleman turned to the Leader of the Opposition and said in regard to the Reserves and the number of battalions and the general reduction, "I have made my position perfectly clear. You say, 'go back to the old seven years and five years system.' I propose, on the other hand"—and the right hon. Gentleman forgot he was speaking in the presence of the First Lord of the Treasury, whom they were all glad to see in the House—"I propose that we should have a long-service Army which should provide us with the necessary men for India, and also a home-service Army providing us with a Reserve." Quite so. They knew the right hon. Gentleman proposed that; but was it going to be done? The right hon. Gentleman would perhaps tell them—for, after all, the Committee would see that the whole thing hung together—that he proposed to convert the Militia into a kind of home-service Army. Nothing could be plainer. There were a great number of officers of Militia in the House who viewed with great concern that proposal, as was shown during recent debates. Some thought it wise and some thought it foolish; but all of them wanted to know. He could give the names of many commanding officers of Militia regiments who assured him that they could not obtain officers or men for their corps because of the state of uncertainty they were in. But when the Leader of the Opposition mentioned this the right hon. Gentleman said: "No, no; I propose to do this when I am allowed; but certain people will not allow me to do it." What a ridiculous state of affairs! Did the right hon. Gentleman propose to do it at all? And if so, when? But, if he did not propose to do it, what about the short-service Army which he now told the Committee he was not going forward with? The right hon. Gentleman fell foul of the Leader of the Opposition because he proposed to return to the seven years with the colours and five years with the Reserve, and said that that would never provide an adequate Reserve for India, which the short-service Army would provide. But if there was not going to be a short-service Army were they to have any Reserves at all?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to reply: "We are."

MAJOR SEELY: Well, they were. They had got it at last. Now, since they were assured that they were to have a short-service Army—which many hon. Members disapproved of — the Committee would be glad to know definitely, here and now, when they were going to have this short-service Army—not the Militia. Could the right hon. Gentleman tell them; or could the Prime Minister tell them, when this short-service Army was to begin? There was no reply. There would be no reply. They all knew that the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, which had many merits, was not approved of by the War Office over which the right hon. Gentleman had control. They knew that the right hon. Gentleman's proposals in regard to the Volunteers had not the approval of those concerned with the Volunteer Department of the War Office. They knew, or at any rate, they heard, that the Committee of Defence would not agree to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. Well, it did seem to him that it was time that there should be an end to all this mystery, this concealment, this evasion. If they were to have a home-service Army and a Reserve, they could not enlist men for nine years service and three years in the Reserve and put off the formation of the short-service Army to the Greek Kalends. If they were to have a home-service Army the House of Commons ought to be frankly told that they were. Many hon. Members believed that the formation of a home-service Army would be a death blow to the Militia, and the Volunteers would probably, in the long run, absolutely fail to produce the result which the right hon. Gentleman and all of them sought, and pave the way to a military system wholly unadapted to our needs. They were told that a home-service Army was going to be formed.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): It is not on the Estimates.

MAJOR SEELY said that, as his hon. and gallant friend had just remarked, it was not on the Estimates; and it was a most irregular procedure for the House, the previous night, to pass the Second Reading of the Army Annual Bill, seeing that we had an entirely new Army.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that the hon. and gallant Member was under an entire misconception. There were a number of battalions now which could be utilised for short service. There was no necessity for a change in any way.

MAJOR SEELY said they were now beginning to get at the facts. This was surely a most extraordinary suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman. The Secretary for War said that he would proceed to form a home-service Army without any reference to the House of Commons, and that there were in this country battalions corresponding to a home-service Army. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that he had, on the sly, been enlisting men for two years? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] He immediately withdrew the words "on the sly" in any offensive sense. He merely wished to show the absurdity of the suggestion that the right hon. Gentleman could form a short-service Army without communication with this House, and that he could enlist men for two years with the colours and six in the Reserve. What about the drafts for India? Were they going to be affected? Of course, this was an entirely new departure. Such a revolution in our military system had not been heard of since the days of Pitt; and the House, naturally, did not want to have a knowledge of it by a kind of side wind. It was not only the effect of the home-service Army on the military problem of the country, but its effect on the Militia and the Volunteers that had to be considered. The right hon Gentleman tried to make the House believe that he now proposed to form a short-service Army, against which many Members seriously protested, without reference to the House, and which was to take the place of the Militia. Were they to have two home-service Armies—one to take the place of the Militia, and another to be set up in five months time when the drafts for India were needed?

Then, in regard to the foreign-service Army, there was an absolute point of disagreement. The right hon. Gentleman had invented an entirely new school of his own. They had had the blue-water school and the War Office school. Now they had the Clacton Beach school, which said that a few dinghies could land a force on these shores and that we should have to surrender to the enemy in six days. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] The right hon. Gentleman did say that competent naval officers had said so.

MR. ARNOLD FORSTER was understood to say that he was bound to confess that the extreme naval view had adopted that statement; but he never had.

MAJOR SEELY said that that was the extreme naval view, and the right hon. Gentleman had stated it with approval. But the right hon. Gentleman himself adopted the view of a possible raid of 5,000 men as a maximum; and the Committee would be glad to know if that was the view of the Clacton Beach school. He protested against the surrender policy. It was no part of his proposal to go into this at any length, but it did seem to him that the suggestion of the Committee of Defence that in the event of this country losing command of the sea they would surrender within six days was most disgraceful.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman the smallest proof that the Committee of Defence had ever laid down such a proposition?

MAJOR SEELY said he had only the statement of the Secretary of State for War. The theory propounded by the right hon. Gentleman was that if we lost command of the sea——

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a contingency which has never been discussed.

MAJOR SEELY said he was sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that it was not a contingency to be discussed, because he, for his part, thought it was a very proper contingency to discuss. If the evil day ever came and we lost command of the sea temporarily our proper course was not to surrender but to labour and suffer until we recovered it. [Laughter.] He would beg those who laughed to remember that he had on his side those who had studied the question deeply and also those who had studied naval strategy in all its bearings. His point was that while invasion might or might not become more or less likely or possible, a blockade had become absolutely impossible. When it was remembered that the whole of the Japanese fleet found it impossible to blockade the narrow entrance to the harbour of Port Arthur there was something to be said for the theory that the starvation of the people of this country was an impossibility, and the steadfast qualities of our people did not lead them to regard lightly the policy of surrender. The idea that if they lost command of the sea they were to abandon all the causes they held dear was one he would never endorse. [A voice: No one does.]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I strongly object to the hon. Gentleman's remarks. This is neither the Vote nor the occasion for the hon. Gentleman to give his favourite version of the views of the Committee of National Defence.

MAJOR SEELY: We should be glad to know what the views of the right hon. Gentleman were.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Our rules lay down a proper occasion when our views should be given.

MAJOR SEELY asked how it was possible to discuss Vote 1 of the Army Estimates and what men were to be obtained until they had arrived at some kind of agreement as to whether the men were required for this country or not. It was very easy to say this question should be discussed on item "E," but the Committee had been put off discussing this matter for over a year by such statements as that. The Committee passed last year provisional Estimates on the understanding that the whole matter would be put right in the course of the year, and they now found themselves in a greater state of obfuscation than they were last year. He applied to hon. and right hon Gentlemen to say, Did any one know what the War Office proposed to do with the Militia? Did any one know what was intended to be done with the home-service Army? The right hon. Gentleman in his speech had attempted to show that all reductions were impossible. On the other hand the late Chancellor of the Exchequer said large reductions were essential.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I did not say no reductions were possible. I said if the House intended to maintain the Army in its present condition there could be no reduction.

Major SEELY said the right hon. Gentleman had said the only possible way of reducing the Estimates was by the reduction of the home-service Army. That was not part of the scheme when these Estimates were produced. Therefore on the scheme produced it was impossible to make reductions. Economy had been assented to by both sides of the House and yet they could not proceed with the reductions because they did not know what was intended with regard to the home-service Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers, and what was to govern the policy of the Government on this question. It was no good doing anything until they knew what was wanted, and if the Government would give some lead the whole Committee would be grateful. He trusted that whatever school of thought governed the policy the Government would never admit that they belonged to the school of surrender. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,101,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Major Seely.*)

*Sir CHARLES WELBY (Nottinghamshire, Newark) said he did not cavil at the delay which had taken place in carrying out the schemes which the right hon. Gentleman had put before the House last year. He was, on the contrary, grateful for it, because it had given the country time to grasp and consider those important and far-reaching proposals. He confessed that the right hon. Gentleman was something of an enigma to him. When he listened to the general statements of principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman he found himself in general agreement with them. When he pointed out our peculiar position as an island power, when he pointed out the very limited danger of invasion and the necessity of our keeping our Army up for the purpose of warfare abroad, and when he pointed to the Indian frontier as the main source of danger he was in agreement with the right hon. Gentleman. But when the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to his concrete proposals based on those broad statements of principle, then it was impossible to reconcile the principle with the proposals made. He was now referring particularly to the proposals with regard to the Regular Army. He found himself to a large extent in agreement with the Militia policy which the right hon. Gentleman now put forward as against that put forward last year, assuming it to be a genuine scheme to improve and strengthen the Militia force, but he could only approve of it on condition that the plan of home-service battalions should be dropped. There was no room in our military system for both. It was extremely difficult to follow the right hon. Gentleman in regard to his proposals for the Regular Army. For the first time it was recognised that the Regular Army existed for war abroad only, and yet our small Army was to be divided into a home-service and a foreign-service Army. That proposal was, moreover, not compatible with our obtaining a large and efficient Reserve, which was our great need at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that his home-service battalions would have a large Reserve, large in numbers no doubt, but of very young men insufficiently trained, who had only seen two years service in the ranks and no foreign service at all. On the other hand, the general-service Reserve would be trained men, but quite inadequate in numbers. The right hon. Gentleman insisted that the chief business of the Army in the future was the defence of India against a European Power, and yet he gave this country a force far less efficient for the purpose than that which we now possessed. The Government had declared that in their deliberate opinion it was necessary to have not less than 100,000 men ready to be sent from this country to reinforce the Indian Army and to make the frontier of India secure, such a force would include some seventy battalions of infantry, and how would they be provided under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme?

There would be a certain number of Guards and general-service battalions, perhaps thirty in all, and for the remaining forty the right hon. Gentleman would have to fall back upon the home-service battalions. The composition of these had been so fully exposed that it was unnecessary to deal with it at length. They contained only a very small proportion of long-service men, while as for the remainder, about one-fourth would consist of boys of from eighteen to twenty years of age with less than two years service with the colours and no experience outside these islands, and the rest would be men from the Reserve, but still young men who had not served outside these islands and who had not the training which would fit them for service in the field.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said it was not contemplated that boys of eighteen to twenty years of age should be sent to the Indian frontier. The battalions would have the same composition as obtained in any army in Europe.

*Sir CHARLES WELBY said his point was that the battalions would consist mainly of Reserves, which the right hon. Gentleman did not deny.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER remarked that the hon. Member stated that the men would be from eighteen to twenty years of age. That was not so; the battalions would be composed of men above twenty years of age.

*Sir CHARLES WELBY said the right hon. Gentleman was making the large assumption that he would get his recruits at the age of nineteen. But even assuming that, and that he sent no man until he had served one year with the colours, the men would not be more than twenty-one years of age, and the great bulk of the Reserves would be young soldiers with little military experience. Battalions so constituted would be vastly inferior to the battalions now available, and he would like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman whether his military colleagues in the Army Council were fully satisfied as to the efficiency of the battalions for that particular purpose.

He was glad to note a tendency in certain quarters to go back to the principle of the Cardwell system, in the virtues of which he had always been a believer, though he was perfectly conscious of its shortcomings. The more he saw of these new schemes which appeared and passed away with bewildering rapidity, the more he was convinced that the Cardwell system was, on the whole, the best and the most adapted to the requirements of the country. If, however, the best was to be made of that system, there must be an adequate number of *cadres*, and he entirely agreed with the Secretary of State that our Regular Army was none too large. To praise the Cardwell system in one breath and in the next to advocate a large reduction of battalions was altogether inconsistent. Hitherto the Cardwell system had been perpetually overstrained, but there were circumstances at present which would give it a better chance than it had had yet. New battalions had been added, and the Secretary of State had been able to prevail upon the naval authorities and the Council of Defence to admit the possibility of withdrawing a certain number of battalions from colonial stations. These things greatly simplified the problem. The most cogent criticism against the Cardwell system was that in the form in which it had hitherto existed it did not yield a sufficient Reserve according to modern ideas. It was indisputably true that a system of seven years with the colours and five in the Reserve did not yield a sufficient Reserve, and to meet that fault the three years and the two years enlistments had been proposed. In his opinion that was beginning at the wrong end. The way to increase the Reserve was not to reduce too much the period of colour service, but to lengthen the period of Reserve service. The fault of the Cardwell system was that it engaged the men for twelve years, and so lost hold of them at the age of twenty-nine or thirty, when they were in their full fighting power. He would like to see men engaged for twenty-one years, with a colour service of six or seven years, and a Reserve service of fourteen or fifteen years, with the Reserves so classified that as the men got older and more advanced in their Reserve service their liability to active service should be proportionately diminished. As to whether the men would engage for twenty-one years, his view was that the period of colour service affected the question far more than the period of Reserve service, and as he understood it was now the view of the War Office that it was almost as easy to get men for nine as for three years he could not believe that a period of six or seven years with the colours followed by fourteen or fifteen years in the Reserve would act as a deterrent.

He had the greatest horror of amateur schemes with regard to the Army, and, if he might say so without offence, that was the main blot on the scheme of the Secretary of State. It was the scheme of an amateur—an able and enthusiastic amateur with a great knowledge of the subject, but still an amateur, and the weak point was that the right hon. Gentleman had not the best opinion of the Army behind him. That was where the present scheme differed from the Cardwell scheme. The late Lord Cardwell did not invent his own scheme. He called together the best of the young and progressive school of officers he could find, such as the present Lord Wolseley and Lord Cromer, and they hammered out a scheme, and then, having satisfied himself that it was sound, he made himself responsible for it. Only in that way was it possible to arrive at any firm foundation for a final settlement of the problem of Army organisation. If there was one thing the Army sorely needed at present it was a final settlement of this question. He should vote against the Amendment because he believed it was altogether unreasonable and impracticable, but he earnestly hoped that Members would not be told that by voting these Estimates they had committed themselves to certain principles laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, to the division of our small Army into two parts, or to the creation of short-service battalions which, besides being ineffective in themselves, would be absolutely fatal to the Militia.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) believed that it was only by carrying a substantial reduction such as was now proposed that the House would be able to bring to an end the present waste in the management of the Army or to secure any effective reform. It was now known that the Army was required not for the defence of these islands, but for the defence of the Indian frontier, and he suggested that the Secretary of State should tell the Committee definitely upon what the provisions of the Government for the defence of the Indian frontier were based. Any attempt to consider as a whole the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman was unreal until the Committee knew what the requirements were and upon what they were based. The Secretary of State had said that he was endeavouring to meet the demands not of the Council of Imperial Defence, but of the Indian Government. Those demands changed with every Viceroy, and frequently with the Commanders-in-Chief. One Viceroy would get on the mountains in the direction of Tibet, Afghanistan, or Persia, while another would remain behind the natural frontier of India, extending railways, laying out the necessary camps, and providing for the defence of India within its natural frontiers. Upon which of those policies was this scheme based? One Commander-in-Chief, like the late Sir Donald Stewart, would uphold the defensive policy, while another would march through Afghanistan and into the territory of another Power on his way to Moscow. Which of those policies was to prevail? These were not questions which could be decided permanently by the Government of India, they must be decided by the Council of Defence, and it was only by the Council of Defence laying down a settled policy and Parliament approving of that policy that there could be any fixed principle upon which to base the number of Regulars that should be kept. That was a serious consideration in regard to which the House had had no definite information. Upon that policy depended whether the white garrison to be maintained for the defence of the Indian frontier should be 75,000 or 150,000. Which of those numbers did the Government seek to maintain? It was not only the question of the number of Regulars; it was also the question of the time there would be to prepare for the defence. If they waited near the Indian frontier there would be plenty of time to train the troops and send them out; but if they were going to advance into the territory of a neighbouring Power, 150,000 Regulars able to march at once would be necessary. That was why so much depended upon the settlement of the policy, and why he thought the right hon. Gentleman was wrong in deprecating discussion in the House of Commons.

With the criticisms of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Auxiliary Forces he generally concurred, not because he thought expert opinion was not of great value, but because it had been directed very much to the maintenance of Regular troops. At the same time it could not be that the Committee of Defence disapproved of the present system of Auxiliary Forces, and that they were in favour of increasing the Regular strength and reducing the strength of the Auxiliary Forces, or else the right hon. Gentleman's proposals would have been more adequately supported. Either the Committee of Defence had not approved of that policy, or the Government had not supported the Committee. He believed that, generally, the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman towards the Auxiliary Forces had been most unfortunate. In his own experience of the Volunteers and the Militia, service both by officers and privates was readily given—in the Volunteers especially, and to some extent in the Militia. It was felt that they were wanted and the service was therefore readily given. He thought the Volunteers and the Militia had got keener of late years because the relations between them and the Regulars had become better. But if the right hon. Gentleman taught the country and the Regulars to look down on the Auxiliary Forces he would take the life out of the movement. The Volunteers and the Militia had both been increasing in efficiency of late years, especially in the mounted corps and the artillery, which were the two branches of which alone he had any experience. These branches would become more efficient still. It was not merely a question of reducing inefficient units. In that they all agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. That was one thing, and to reduce efficient units was another, and under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme it might quite well become necessary to reduce efficient units. He was opposed to that general idea because, after all, the right hon. Gentleman ought to be able to save £1,000,000 a year from the Army Estimates. He could not save that out of the £2,000,000 devoted to the service of the Militia and Volunteers. It was a very small proportion of the £2,000,000 he could save. The saving ought to be made on the £28,000,000 spent on the Regulars, and on the expenditure on military works which brought up the cost to nearly £35,000,000. He believed the Auxiliary Forces did great good in stimulating the martial spirit of the nation and in saving us against conscription. We should concentrate on reducing the number in the Regular force, which could be done if we had a clear conception what our Indian frontier policy was to be. It was on that the country expected a saving to be made.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he had been anxious to move a separate reduction in order to call specific attention to the question of the Auxiliary Forces for they should not be confused with the upper branches of the service, and in that way to evoke a definite and distinct expression of opinion wholly independent of foreign policies.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If I may, I would make an appeal to the Committee and the Government whether it would not be desirable to take the division which was postponed last night in order that the hon. and gallant Gentleman may address himself in a clear and detached way to the question which he wishes to bring before the Committee. I think that would be for the convenience of the Committee.

Colonel BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield): I should like to say that there are Members who wish to speak on other questions besides the Volunteer question.

*Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I understand it will still be open to hon. Members to speak on the broader question even if this Amendment is removed by a division.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is so, certainly. Supposing the Committee came to a decision on the Amendment it would be open for any Member of the Committee to raise any further question or to raise the general question.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said he was perfectly ready to give way if the Committee desired. It seemed to him that many hon. Members were unwilling that the division should be taken now. As to the treatment of the Militia and Volunteers the great difficulty they had to complain of was the absolute uncertainty which prevailed with respect to the policy of the War Office and the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman had been so good as to address the Committee five times on the Army Estimates. He had made speeches of considerable length which were no doubt full of details. Speaking for himself he (the hon. Member) did not really understand where they were in regard to the Militia and Volunteers. In the Memorandum which the right hon. Gentleman had laid before the House he proposed definitely to reduce the Volunteers by some 45,000 men, and thereby bring them down to a maximum strength of 200,000, which he considered as absolutely sufficient for the defence of these islands so far as the Volunteers were concerned. It was upon that issue that he was anxious to take the opinion of the House, because he knew from sources of information which were open to himself and to other hon. Members that there was the greatest dissatisfaction in many quarters with that proposal. He wished to say at once that he had no authority whatever to represent the whole of the Volunteer force. All that he had ever contended in this House was to have been very much interested for upwards of thirty years in the Volunteer force and to have had command of a very large regiment in that body. As to representing the whole of the Volunteer force, he had never laid claim to any position of that kind. It was not necessary for the Secretary of State to say, as he had done, that he did not look upon him as the representative of the whole body. At any rate, he represented a considerable body in the Volunteer force, and he would say, on behalf of that body, that they were anxious to co-operate in every possible way with the Secretary of State, but it did seem strange that the right hon. Gentleman in laying his proposals before the House of Commons should asperse either the condition of the Volunteer force at the present time, or do wrong to that service in the past. He had no doubt that the observations of the right hon. Gentleman came from him in the heat of debate and in great excitement. His language was very fluent, and perhaps words escaped him which exceeded the meaning he was anxious to give to them.

There was one matter on which he hoped the Committee would have fuller information. On February 23rd the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It has been suggested that the Volunteer force is by itself an immense contribution to the Army in the field. That is a delusion. I am not blaming the Volunteers, who have other calls and duties to meet."

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to give certain particulars in connection with the South African War. On a recent occasion he quoted the Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for the year 1900 as his authority for what he had said with regard to the Volunteers. The following extract was also from that Report—

> "In consequence of the duration of the war in South Africa, and the additional forces sent to that country, a considerable number of special corps or units were formed during the year, either to take the place of troops sent to the Cape or to themselves proceed on service abroad.
>
> "The special measures were as follows:—
>
> "1. A large number of Imperial Yeomanry were enlisted.
>
> "2. The City of London Imperial Volunteer Regiment was raised.
>
> "3. Service companies of Volunteers for each regiment in South Africa from their affiliated Volunteer battalions at home were sanctioned.
>
> "4. Volunteer waiting companies were formed, the men of which were at once passed to the Reserve until their services were required.
>
> "5. Volunteer Medical Staff Corps were formed for service in South Africa as well as for home service.
>
> "6. Royal Engineers and Electrical Engineer Volunteer Companies were formed for service in South Africa."

Surely that was a very material and effective contribution from the Volunteer force for service in the field, and hardly merited the aspersion which was cast upon it by the Secretary of State. Then yesterday the right hon. Gentleman repeated an allegation which caused very considerable pain to a large body of men when he stated that of the Volunteers who came forward for service in South Africa no less than 33 per cent. were inefficient for military service. This was what the Inspector-General of Recruiting said—

> "The strength of the detachments furnished by the Volunteer units varied according to the number of the Volunteer units affiliated to the Territorial Line Regiments. The total raised was 11,648, of which over 8,000 proceeded to South Africa by the middle of May; the remainder were sent out later as drafts, or belonged to the waiting companies, being passed temporarily to the Reserve until their services were required.
>
> "The number who volunteered for the Infantry Volunteer Service Companies amounted to 20,929. Of these, there were rejected—
>
> "*a.* For want of physique or on medical grounds, 3,528.
>
> "*b.* As not complying with the regulations as to efficiency, 3,333.
>
> "Leaving fit for active service of those who volunteered, 14,068."

The regulations with regard to efficiency were of a very serious character. The men required to have two years service, to be single men, and to be marksmen. He was unwilling to institute comparisons between one branch and another, but he must remind the Secretary of State for War that his predecessor stated in 1899 that no less than 30 per cent. of the men who had enlisted in the Regular Army were found on medical examination to be ineffective in the field. It was really unfair for the Secretary of State to take a portion of the Reports of officers in high command and responsible positions, and quote them to the House as conveying an adverse opinion of the military authorities in regard to the Volunteer force.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I quoted the opinions of officers of the Volunteers themselves.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said he was coming to these officers presently, but he should like to read to the Committee one final extract from the Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting—

> "A consideration of these figures, and the early dates on which the Yeomanry and City of London Imperial Volunteer Regiment were able to embark, is a striking testimony to the untiring zeal and public spirit displayed by the members of the Imperial Yeomanry and Mansion House Committees and the members of the Auxiliary Forces."

The Secretary of State never took the trouble to turn over the page and quote the opinion of the Inspector-General on this matter. The right hon. Gentleman referred yesterday to the opinion of Colonel Mathias, a very distinguished officer, now commanding the 75th Regimental District at Aberdeen. He also quoted Major-General MacKinnon, an officer who had the complete confidence of the entire Militia, Volunteer, and Yeomanry forces. He himself had had no communication with Major-General MacKinnon, but he had every reason to believe that the state of uncertainty which existed greatly hampered the work of his Department. Major-General MacKinnon, in the opinion which was quoted, was careful not to say that the opinion was formed after he had seen the City Imperial recruits. The opinion he afterwards formed——

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER rose to speak, but

SIR HOWARD VINCENT, declining to give way, said his right hon. friend was very kind in interrupting. He was anxious not to be unfair to him in any way. They all knew his zeal, and they read with delight the speech he made at Liverpool when he said he was a most sympathetic person towards the Volunteer force. He only wished the right hon. Gentleman would give the House greater evidence of the continuance of that feeling if it was still unchanged. He should have liked to hear the right hon. Gentleman quote the opinion of General Douglas, the present Adjutant-General, and a member of the Army Council. He would be astonished if General Douglas, the Adjutant of the Scottish Volunteers, came forward and said 40 per cent. of that force was inefficient in physique. He was an officer connected with the Volunteer force. He agreed that they had heard exceedingly little of the opinion of the Army Council and a great deal of the opinion of the Secretary of State for War, but he thought it would be more effective if his right hon. friend quoted the opinions of experienced military members of his own Council. No doubt some men, at the time of their enlistment, were wanting in physique, but everyone connected with any military body would admit that a very considerable improvement took place in a few months in the physique and development of those men. It was untrue to say that Volunteer officers took anybody, good, bad, or indifferent. That was done with regard to the second and third contingent of Imperial Yeomanry sent to South Africa, but it was not done in any properly conducted Volunteer corps. He was astonished that this inefficiency, if it existed, had only been so recently discovered. The Commission appointed by the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor to inquire into the Militia and Volunteer forces, a Commission presided over by the Duke of Norfolk, took quite a different view. That Commission examined a considerable number of witnesses and expressed their opinion that the Volunteer forces had had a great effect in educating the people of Great Britain to look on the Army as a national institution, whilst it had broadened the minds of the Regular soldiers, and they deprecated any change which would modify the spirit which their *status* authorised, or any fundamental change in their position. He could not understand why the Secretary of State for War, who had only been at the War Office some twelve or sixteen months, should insist in reducing the number of men in the Volunteers when men were offering to serve from all parts of the country.

As the Prime Minister was in the House he would venture to make an urgent appeal to him to take some notice of the very strong feeling prevailing in this country with regard to the reduction of the numbers in the Volunteer forces. He asked his right hon. friend to look at the Report of General Miles and note his view of the question, which was that to curtail their numbers and make them into indifferent soldiers was the worst of all policies. The right hon. Gentleman was the President of the Committee of Defence. That Committee had arrived at the opinion that an invasion of this country was very unlikely and that we could depend upon the Navy for our safety. That was the opinion of the English people 100 years ago, but when they saw a great invasion being prepared in France a great panic sprang up and 300,000 Volunteers were enrolled. That scare died out and the Volunteers were neglected until 1859, when another scare took place and Volunteers were again enrolled. The United States of America had taken advantage of the lessons of the South African War; they were 3,000 miles from the nearest European State and yet they had taken steps to render invasion of their country impossible. Was this country doing the same? We were only twenty-one miles away from the nearest Continental State, and that we should be dependent on these theories—for they were nothing more—was, he thought, absurd. The South African expedition was to be a military promenade, in the course of which we were to walk up and take Pretoria, and it was thought that 5,000 men would be an unusual number to send out for such a purpose. We sent out altogether 400,000 and spent £250,000,000. He urged his right hon. friend not to do away with the Volunteer force but to put an end to this extraordinary uncertainty as to its future. The growing want of officers was a thing that the right hon. Gentleman had admitted he was responsible for. A farthing on the income-tax would give the Volunteer force all that was suggested by the Duke of Norfolk's Commission, the Report of which had been in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman for nine months. The right hon. Gentleman approved of that Report, but not a single thing had been done to give effect to its recommendations. He appealed to the Government to stop this bickering at the Volunteer force which rendered such good service in the late war and which was so anxious to work with the right hon. Gentleman, but which could not stand the sneers of the right hon. Gentleman. He assured the Prime Minister that the country was attached to the Volunteer force. There was an almost unanimous feeling on both sides of the House that the recommendations of that Norfolk Commission should be given effect to and that the Volunteer force should be kept up. They did not desire to do anything at the expense of the Militia and Regulars. All they wanted was fair play for the Volunteers.

*SIR J. DICKSON POYNDER said the Volunteer force was so inextricably mixed up with the whole of our military system that it could not be detached and had therefore better be discussed with the general question. The Estimates of £30,000,000, he thought, were susceptible of a large reduction. He did not propose to say or enter into anything in the nature of a political attack because he believed, and most Members of the House believed also, that the problem of the military defence of the Empire was far too important, and its practical solution far too urgent to allow it to be made a battleground of Party politics. He, however, felt quite justified in examining the scheme and criticising what had taken place in the past, what was taking place now, and what the Committee was given to understand would take place in the future. The policy now put forward for Imperial defence was radically different to that laid down two years ago. It was then laid down by the Secretary of State that a large Army was necessary for this country, partly for offensive purposes abroad and partly for defensive purposes at home. Now, there was a complete reversal of that scheme. It was now laid down that the Regular Army should be, in the main, a foreign-service force, for garrisoning our dependencies and foreign possessions; and that as regarded our home defence the Navy was deemed sufficient to protect us from invasion. With great respect, he ventured to say that both those principles erred on the side of the extreme. Formerly, too much stress was placed on military organisation; latterly, too much stress had been laid on naval organisation for home defence. It seemed to him that there should be some intermediate course between the two. There was too much risk involved in the extreme blue-water theory. He recognised that our naval establishments should be maintained at the highest possible efficiency—equal to the two-Power standard; and that every one in the House would approve of the opinion of the Committee of Defence that the naval and military services should be in closer association than they had ever been before. But the scientific principles laid down by the Secretary of War seemed to fail to realise the difference between the dangers attached to the invasion of this country and blockading it. To realise the Secretary of State's contemplated catastrophe of capitulation, he anticipated a successful blockade of all our ports by a foreign navy; this was a highly improbable contingency.

In the military defence of the Empire the main principles ought to be, first of all, a highly-organised Regular Army to garrison our foreign dependencies and possessions; second, a highly-organised Army, known as a striking force, ready at a moment's notice to proceed to any part of the world with its transport; and third, an unlimited mass of men in this country trained to arms for home defence and also to act as the first real Reserve in the event of our being committed to a great war abroad. How were these ideals to be carried out under our complex voluntary system? The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had instituted a system of nine years service for the foreign garrisons; and a home short-service system. The results were so far satisfactory that a large number of recruits had been obtained of a very much better standard than in days gone by. The whole difficulty, however, was that the nine years service automatically decreased the number of Reserves. The right hon. Gentleman suggested that after nine years service the men should fall into a three years Reserve; but he, himself, thought that that Reserve period of service might be profitably extended to six or eight years. He confessed that he did not understand the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman's home-service Army. Last year it was understood that the home-service Army was to be practically substituted for the Militia. This year they were led to believe that this force was to be blended with the Militia; but he ventured to think that whichever method was adopted the important object of a large Reserve could not be realised. It seemed to him that to attempt to have a foreign-service and a home-service Army would, under the peculiar commercial conditions of this country, spoil the recruiting for both.

The Secretary for War believed that a small number of well-paid, highly-trained men was better than a large number of incompletely-trained men; but, in his opinion, we should have, in this country a large number of men, however incompletely trained, ready to be called upon for service in the event of a great war. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was an alarming proportion of the Militia and Volunteers who were not serviceable for war and, therefore, were a chronic and useless strain on the resources of the country. How was that position to be rectified? The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was to substantially reduce the Militia and the Volunteers. But that proposal ran counter to having a large mass of trained men in the country. If a large proportion of these forces were inefficient, something should be done to increase their efficiency, instead of recruiting men of poor physique. If the system of medical examination was insufficient it should be strengthened up. Even if, in the early days of such strengthening up, the numbers of the forces were reduced, that would only be temporary; but, for goodness' sake, do not let them reduce the numbers of these forces permanently. If necessary, much more money should be spent on the Auxiliary Forces of the country so as to increase their standard of efficiency and make them, in time of emergency, susceptible at short notice to a much higher state of efficiency and thereby equal to any call that might be made upon them. In that way the country would have, at the shortest possible date, a large body of Reserves ready to take the field with the Regular Army. The Bill which was to be passed to render the Militia available for foreign service would be sufficient for that branch leaving England in time of war; but much further encouragement could be given to the Volunteers to make a large proportion of them efficient for times of emergency. The War Secretary talked of reducing the number of Volunteers, but not of raising the standard. He would suggest that instead of 200,000 they should have 500,000 Volunteers. They were the cheapest item in the whole Army service. This curtailment of numbers was very unfortunate. They had already seen a reduction in the numbers of the Imperial Yeomanry, which was not only a useful, economical, and most admirable mounted force, but one that had done excellent service abroad. In spite of that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to reduce it from 35,000 to 27,000. Not only would the aggregate number be stereotyped and limited, but the regiments and squadrons would also be stereotyped and limited. That would have a most unfortunate effect upon a force which, in the limited period of three years, had proved to be an economical and useful branch of the service.

Sir J. Dickson-Poynder.

At present both forces were short of competent officers. Those willing to serve could not devote sufficient time to ensure military competence. Suggestions had been made that these Auxiliary Forces should have Regular officers to command them, but there were considerable objections to that plan. If they were to place Regular officers in charge of these units they would immediately check the ambition of junior officers, because they would realise that they could not become commanding officers. They would further, by bringing in a man unknown to the district, put a check on recruiting. If they wanted more competent officers in these battalions in order to raise the standard of efficiency, he would suggest that they should place one of the officers in the Regular Army as second in command, but with wide and extended powers. Such an officer could work in close co-operation with the senior and junior officers, and he was confident that such a scheme would add immensely to the use of those forces.

A method of establishing reliable Reserves must include a reduction in the Regular Army. In all there were 156 battalions, of which something approaching 100 were appropriated to garrisons abroad and our foreign possessions. So long as they insisted upon the Cardwell system being maintained they would have to maintain the remaining battalions. It appeared to him that if they could co-ordinate their depôts and arrange for a central depôt into which to draft men for the Regular foreign Army and the striking force, and to have under that central depôt a group of minor depots for Auxiliary training, they would probably produce sufficient men for the foreign Army and the striking force, and at the same time substantially reduce the number of battalions. There would thus be given an opportunity for very considerable reductions, some of which would have to be ear-marked immediately for the higher price to be paid for the Auxiliary Forces of higher standards. By this method the foreign Army would be reduced to the smallest limits, and every man ought to be physically strong and ready for a time of emergency. The Leader of the Opposition struck a very important note on the previous night when he reminded them that men who entered the Army and served for nine years had at the end of that time reached a period of their lives when it was extremely important that they should be assured employment. It was one of the most important and urgent requirements in the Army, especially with a nine years service, that every man on the expiration of his service should, presuming he was of good conduct, have employment assured to him. An analysis of the Poor Law returns of the different counties would show that a serious proportion of the recipients of relief were formerly in the Army. The return of 1904, for Wiltshire, showed that 37,000 vagrants were relieved, and that nearly 5,000 of the number were old soldiers; when it was remembered that many of the recipients of relief were professional vagrants, it would be realised that 5,000 was a very large proportion of the remainder. The matter was so important that it would be worth while having a Return prepared showing the number of vagrants relieved in each county and the number of old soldiers included therein. He thought if the right hon. Gentleman would accept the suggestion made from all corners of the House with regard to the Auxiliary Forces, he would have an Army able to meet all national and Imperial demands.

*Colonel LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) expressed his sympathy with the Secretary of State for War, who not only had to meet criticisms from within and without the War Office but was also expected to give his attention to the gossip of regimental messes and military clubs as retailed to the House. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was not singular in that respect, but had illustrious predecessors in his office who had been treated in like manner. When an old soldier rose to address the Committee on the topic of the Army he was always told that he was prejudiced against the Auxiliary Forces. On his own behalf he begged to deny that emphatically. He had the greatest sympathy with the Auxiliary Forces and he had no prejudice in favour of any particular branch of the service. He had served both in infantry and cavalry; at home and abroad, in peace and in war. He had been adjutant of a school of instruction for officers of the Auxiliary Forces (Militia and Volunteers), had also been an adjutant of Yeomanry; he had filled the post of instructor of musketry, and therefore he hoped he would not be accused of betraying feeling against any branch of the service if he said anything to which his hon. friends could not assent.

With regard to the Army scheme it seemed to be generally admitted that the object for which a Regular Army was kept was not the defence of these islands but the defence of the Empire, and they had to bear in mind that whereas in Europe our only land frontier was Gibraltar it was very different with regard to Asia, Africa, and America. The first thing to be decided was the number required for the Regular Army. He wished the question of Army policy could be withdrawn from Party politics, and he hoped that before the debate was concluded some general agreement would be arrived at with regard to the standard of the Army. That must be based in the first instance on the garrisons kept abroad. They had 75,000 in India, and 61,000 in the Colonies and Egypt, making a total of 136,000, and the question arose as to the number of men that ought to be kept at home in order to augment those forces in the event of war breaking out. It did not seem to him, looking at it from that point of view, that they were asking for an excessive force. In the case of war they would want to double their garrisons, and would require a force equal to the present garrisons for reinforcements. The question was how to obtain those additional men. They had tried the original long-service system and had found that there was no Reserve. Then they had tried the short-service system and found that it gave them a Reserve but no first line. When in 1899 the War Secretary had to mobilise the Army it was not up to strength by 14,000 men. They would have to keep up an Army with a moderately long service for foreign purposes, but at the same time with a short service for the purpose of Reserve. Although our previous system was not perfect and did not give all the men that were required, it was perfectly sound in that men were enlisted for seven years with the colours and for five years in the Reserve. That did not apply to the whole Army at home, where the Secretary for War had the power to pass men into the Reserve at an earlier date. He could not help thinking that some extension of that system would meet the requirements and would be preferable to having two terms of service. They also wanted a reserve of officers. At present the state of things was very unsatisfactory. The reserve was composed chiefly of officers who had retired from the Regular service on pensions or gratuities, and either voluntarily or compulsorily. Those men who retired voluntarily did so because they had had enough of soldiering, and the compulsory section retired because soldiering had had enough of them. That system was not satisfactory; it did not supply a reserve of young officers. When the Reserve officers were called out in the late war, the majority of them were field officers or captains and there were no subalterns. There was the third class of officers who retired on account of age. When they were turned out of the service they had to pass another five or seven years in the Reserve, and surely if a man was unfit on account of age to serve in the Regular Army he ought not to be kept in the Reserve.

He welcomed the proposition made in another place to make the Militia liable to be called upon for foreign service. There was nothing unconstitutional in that provision, and he believed they would be quite ready to undertake that responsibility. There was no utility in keeping any force at home unless it was liable to be called upon for service in time of war. With regard to the training of the Militia he thought the present time allowed was not sufficient, and if the condition of going abroad in time of war was to be imposed the period must be increased. It would be too late when war broke out to train the force. As everyone would agree, peace time was, from a soldier's point of view, the time in which to prepare for war. Very little had been said in regard to the Yeomanry. Their case was a very peculiar one, inasmuch as in 1901 they were placed under the Militia Act. Were they to be made liable for foreign service in the same way as the Militia? The Yeomanry came forward extremely well in the South African War. The Imperial Yeomanry were formed partly from the existing Yeomanry, partly from the Volunteers, and partly from civilians. The first contingent had some training before they went out, the second contingent had none, but in spite of that the latter contingent rendered good service in the war. They could not depend on the theatre of war, however, for the training of our soldiers. He did not wish to lay down any hard-and-fast rule as to the amount of training a man should have. They knew the rule with regard to soldiers generally, but the Yeomanry were a superior class of men. They could all ride before they entered the Yeomanry, and no doubt they required a shorter training than was necessary for ordinary recruits. But the idea of training could be carried too far, as was shown in the case of the rider of the winner in the French Grand Prix, who when drawn for one year's compulsory service was put in an infantry regiment on the ground that he could not be taught to ride in less than three years. As to the Volunteers, he should like to see that force brought up to a very high standard of efficiency. He was told that any reduction in their numbers—and he believed a reduction must be effected if they were to be made more efficient—would lead to the loss of seats in this House. He thought that could hardly be true, but if it was, it was a serious matter, because it meant that the Volunteer force was more a political than a military organisation. Whatever force we had, and whatever that force might be, it was necessary that it should be properly organised, properly trained, and liable to serve out of the country in time of necessity.

*Lord HENRY BENTINCK (Nottingham, S.) said that he appreciated the point of view of the Secretary of State for War in regard to the Volunteers, for if it were true that there was a large percentage of the force not fit to go abroad on active service the right hon. Gentleman could not be blamed for reducing them in an attempt to get value for his money. However the Volunteers were regarded—whether as a means of home defence, or a possible Reserve to draw upon in time of hostilities abroad—it was impossible to regard the proposed reduction as otherwise than a means to obtain efficiency in the future. If the results of the proposal were only to have a stricter medical examination for recruits, the inevitable consequence would be that a larger number of Volunteers when they came forward in case of emergency for active service would be able to pass the doctor. Thus we should have a larger number of Volunteers fit for service than hitherto. He trusted, however, that the Secretary of State for War would not drive the matter of reduction too hard, but would content himself with stricter medical examination. The Volunteers were a cheap force, and the House of Commons would be only too glad to vote an increased sum for them. Personally, he would be glad it the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that something was to be granted in compensation for what he was taking away, and especially that he would pay regard to the recommendations of the Duke of Norfolk's Commission that it ought to be a cardinal doctrine that no Volunteer should be put to any expense with regard to his service.

As to the proposal to merge the Militia into a home-service Army, the Secretary of State for War had been accused of wishing to destroy the only machinery which we had for raising a large body of troops in case we were engaged in protracted hostilities. He believed that instead of destroying that machinery the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would very largely increase its efficiency. In case of war on the North-West Indian frontier, for instance, we could at once send out a large number of home-service Reserves to reinforce the active service battalions, while at home we could expand battalions into brigades, and fill the brigades with the remaining Reservists and all the able-bodied Volunteers that came forward. That force could be officered by officers of the Regulars and the competent officers of Militia and Volunteers. Thus instead of sending out a great number of weak ill-trained units commanded by ill-instructed officers we should have a force which could be easily knocked into shape and sent out homogeneous and effective, commanded by officers who knew their business. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would press forward his proposals.

*Colonel BOWLES said that, personally, he should have liked this Vote to be put down at a later period of the session so that it might have been preceded by the discussion of the Vote for the Committee of Defence. To discuss properly the question of the Army it was necessary to know to what purposes the Army was to be put, and that was a matter which came up more prominently in connection with the Committee of Defence. Consequently, the present discussion would have been far more valuable had Members been in possession of the views of the Committee of Defence. He desired to speak with regard to the two branches of the service which with he had been connected—the Volunteers and the Militia. He could not help feeling that the new scheme for the Militia would be beneficial to the force, but he greatly regretted the remarks of the Secretary of State with reference to the Volunteers. One of the main reasons why the best possible material was not obtained for the Volunteers was that there existed, with regard to that force, the same uncertainty that prevailed throughout the whole of our military system, and until an end was put to that uncertainty there would always be a difficulty in the way of proper recruiting. But perhaps the most important factor of all was the doubt as to the purpose for which the force was to be utilised. The Volunteers could be utilised either as complete units or as a feeding force for the battalions of the Line. If the latter was intended there was not so much necessity for the high training that would otherwise be essential. At present Volunteer officers worked under great difficulties; they were not given that scope to which they were entitled in the way of military schools or those conveniences to attend such schools which would be so great an advantage to men with a limited amount of time for military education. When these considerations were taken into account, he regarded it as a matter of surprise that the Volunteer force had succeeded as well as it had, in spite of the War Office and of the Secretaries of State for War. The whole question was one of such uncertainty that it was impossible to give a proper and logical vote without knowing the basis on which the Committee of Defence desired the country to act.

*SIR LEES KNOWLES said he certainly could not vote for any reduction of expenditure upon the Army. Speaking as one interested in Volunteers he was sure that his hon. friends who had taken so much interest in the Volunteers would take their blow like men, and would do their best to live up to the expectations of his right hon. friend and the War Office. Upon the 8th of August last he endeavoured to defend the fourteen Line battalions which his right hon. friend now proposed to disband. He hoped, however, that he would reconsider that proposal, and decide not to disband them. Those battalions had worked hard and had acquitted themselves with great credit. They had attached themselves to the older battalions of the Line and had worked up a magnificent *esprit de corps*, and he thought it was very hard upon both officers and men that the War Office should think of disbanding them. It should be remembered that the officers had left other regiments in order to join those fourteen battalions, and if they were disbanded those officers would have to join other battalions, and there would be all the cost of their uniform and other expenses. He had suggested a solution as an alternative to disbanding them, and it was that they should be reduced from 1,000 to 500 men, then they would keep their staffs, and at a moment's notice, if necessary, would be able to increase the numbers and again raise those battalions to 1,000 men apiece if war broke out. It would be a great blow to the territorial system and *esprit de corps* if these battalions were disbanded.

With regard to the Volunteers he did not think the Committee really appreciated that the Volunteers were volunteers. They could not say to them "go" and "come" in the same way as they could say it to the men in the Line. With regard to the proposed reduction he was afraid it would do a great deal of harm to the country, especially when they were now hearing a good deal about the necessity for physical training. Personally he would like to see every man serve a certain length of time in the Volunteers, the Militia, or the Regulars in order to get that physical training. If they reduced the number of Volunteers they would prevent a certain amount of that physical training. At present they had to submit to a medical examination, and if necessary that examination might be made more strict. Colonel F. Haworth, of the 3rd V.B., the Lancashire Fusiliers, had been quoted as having stated that if the Volunteers were examined by a doctor 25 per cent. of them would be rejected. He had written to the colonel upon this point, and he had been requested to say that what he meant was that the Volunteers would not reach the high standard of medical efficiency which was required by the men in the Line. When people were talking about Volunteers it was generally forgotten at what age men joined the Volunteers. In the above battalion with which he was connected as second in command the average age was nineteen years and the average standard height five feet five inches. A boy could join the Volunteers at seventeen and a-half years of age, and this was very different to what it was fifteen years ago, when the average age was twenty-three years and the average height five feet seven inches. The bulk of the Volunteers were now merely immature youths, but in time they would gradually become fit men. There were Volunteer battalions and Volunteer battalions. His hon. and gallant friend the Member for Sheffield spoke for the crack London corps, but he was speaking for a corps composed principally of working men and artisans. They must not expect to get the same standard all through the different corps. The standard required of Volunteers for home defence was not the standard required for the Regulars, because the latter had to serve in India, and by the regulations the Line man was not sent on foreign service unless he had attained a certain mature age. Who fixed these regulations and standards? Not the Volunteers. They only enlisted their men according to the requirements of the War Office. Why, then, should they say that a large percentage were enlisted who would not pass the examination necessary for the Line? Why should they? They were not expected to serve abroad like the Line men, but they passed the examination that was necessary for their particular work.

It was said that the Volunteers enlisted into the Militia in order to pass into the Line, and that they stayed in the Militia until they became fit for the Line. He desired to say from personal experience that that was not so, because he had examined the figures and he found that an equal number of Volunteers passed into the Line and an equal number into the Militia. It was not the case that they passed from the Militia into the Line. The men as a rule joined the Militia when out of employment, and he knew that every inducement was put forward to persuade them to join the Line rather than the Militia. One point which appeared to have been overlooked was that they had a very large percentage of old soldiers in the Volunteers. He thought it would astonish a good many hon. Members if they were to see the number of medals worn by the members of Volunteer battalions. In his battalion they had a man who had won the V.C., and there were a large number of excellent soldiers in the Volunteers who could not be described simply as ordinary Volunteers. With regard to active service companies, he conceived the idea of them himself, and he believed it had emanated from him because he had had a correspondence on the subject with Lord Wolseley in 1899. When it was being discussed as to how many volunteered for South Africa it ought to be remembered that only unmarried men were eligible, and they were obliged to be marksmen; and further than that, no officers were wanted except an occasional captain or subaltern. So far as he was concerned personally, he offered his services in any capacity, military or civil, without costing the State one penny. He was thanked for his patriotic offer, as it was described, by the War Office, but he was not examined medically although he thought he could have given points in athletics to a good many of his friends. People were very often mislead with regard to Volunteers. As to the statement that some of the Volunteers did not offer their services, and would not go out, until 5s. a day was offered them in pay, he wished to say a few words. His district sent three active service companies, and he knew that some of those men who offered their services when the pay was 5s. were men who were rejected when the pay was 1s. per day, and they were afterwards accepted at 5s. a day. That was an absolute fact, and it was very hard that mud should be thrown at the Volunteers and the statement made that they only went out when 5s. a day was offered them. He would not object if they would only hear both sides of the question.

He would like to say one or two words in regard to the reports upon these Volunteer active service companies, and he would read an extract from the history of the Lancashire Fusiliers, where it was stated—

> "On the departure of the active service companies a very appreciative order was published by Major-General Wynne, C.B., commanding XI. (Lancashire) Brigade, at Blood River, October 12th, 1900:—
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> "On the departure of the Volunteer companies for England, the general officer commanding desires to place on record his appreciation of the good services they have rendered while serving with the Regular battalions of their regiments (in South Africa. Their arrival in April last was a welcome addition to the brigade, and the cheerful and efficient manner in which they have always performed their duties has proved them reliable soldiers."

And, Lieut.-Colonel C. J. Blomfield, D.S.O., commanding the 2nd Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers, wrote, recording his appreciation of the excellent work done by the Volunteers and stated—

> "Officers, non-commissioned officers and men have shown a most soldierly spirit throughout, bearing privations and hardships with cheerfulness, and evincing on all occasions the greatest keenness and zeal. The commanding officer is convinced that the close association on active service will cement more strongly than before the spirit of good fellowship and comradeship between all battalions of the Lancashire Fusiliers."

He could give the House further illustrations if they were necessary. He trusted that the War Office would grasp the situation. They all remembered the old fable of the lion being saved by the mouse. Now the fable in regard to the Volunteers seemed to be reversed. The Regular Army went out to South Africa, and were in difficulties, when the Militia, the Yeomanry, the Volunteers, the Colonial troops, etc., went out to assist them, and at any rate they did a great deal to bring the war to an end. Now that the mouse had saved the lion the War Office desired to put its paw down and crush the mouse. He did not mind the Volunteers being screwed up as regarded efficiency. He asked the Committee to remember what some of the regiments had actually to keep up. They had to make payments with respect to headquarters, ranges, and camps and the constant attacks made on the Volunteers and the endless uncertainty which prevailed were extremely unfortunate. If the root of the evil was the desire to introduce conscription let them know it, but, at all events, so far as the Volunteers were concerned, mend them or end them: but, let them know their fate.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead) said he wished to call the attention of the Secretary of State for War to the lack of provision for mounted riflemen. It was necessary to make further provision for meeting such a crisis as we went through five years ago, when we had to improvise an Army almost equal in numbers to a Continental Army—an Army of 500,000 men. It could not be said that the same emergency would never occur again, for it was easy to conceive that such a contingency might be forthcoming in the future. It was very easy to improvise good men for the ranks from the superior material in the Volunteers in the case of a crisis. In modern warfare practically no drill was required. Drill could be learned by any intelligent man in a few days. Very high discipline was required, but that discipline was very much more readily implanted in the superior class in the Volunteers who came forward to assist their country in time of crisis. This remark applied to those who volunteered in the really dark days of the South African War. They very rapidly acquired the necessary discipline, and more especially those who found themselves serving with and under men whom they knew, and whom they had been accustomed to respect and support. But two things were necessary if we were properly to avail ourselves of the large supply of superior material the nation possessed First of all there must be men to instruct it, and, therefore, we must have a large supply of officers, and, above all, a large supply of trained non-commissioned officers.

He did not like to hear of the large reduction which was proposed in the Volunteer battalions, because the men who joined the Auxiliary Forces were those who came forward to serve the country in time of war. He would regret any reduction in the permanent staff attached to the Auxiliary Forces. He would rejoice to see an increase in the establishment of non-commissioned officers in the Regular Army, so that in time of crisis there might be a large number of thoroughly trained men available for the training of those who came forward in time of crisis. The men who volunteered might be good representatives of the physique of the nation, but at the same time they might be men who had had absolutely no previous training whatever in rifle-shooting. He could not see any reason why all boys should not be taught at school such an amount of accuracy in rifle-shooting as would be useful to them in case of their services being afterwards required in war. Although boys at school could not be trained to anything like Bisley efficiency in shooting, they could be given some idea of how to handle a rifle which they would never forget all their lives. It was generally admitted that the experience of the Boer War and the Russo-Japanese War proved the enormous importance of mobility. On the outbreak of war there would always be a very great demand for mounted rifles, and he wished to know whether sufficient provision was being made for giving the requisite supply. At present our cavalry were being trained very largely in the use of the rifle. He thought they owed a great deal to Lord Roberts in that respect. Personally he believed that in modern war there would be a great demand for mounted riflemen. At present the mounted infantry were trained as companies attached to the infantry regiments. He could not think that that would give a satisfactory result in time of war. The company of mounted infantry would probably be the pick of the regiment, and as every mounted man would be asked for in the field by the general in command, so as to form great corps of mounted rifles, the infantry regiments would be deprived of the services of their best men when they most wanted them, He believed that if occasion demanded a much larger number of Yeomanry than before would volunteer for service abroad. He thought that the Secretary for War should try the experiment of training one of the light infantry regiments in mounted rifle work either at Aldershot or Salisbury Plain.

MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek) said that as he had served thirty-five years in a Militia regiment, of which he was now honorary colonel, he would not like to be silent in the discussion on this Vote. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had told the House that the Militia could not be left in its present unsatisfactory condition, that prompt measures must be taken to level the force up to the standard of the Line, and that the period of training should be prolonged. Now, he asked the right hon. Gentleman, what he had done to carry out his own suggestions? All those who took an interest in the Militia would sympathise with him in his desire to suppress regiments which were inefficient in point of numbers of officers and men, and to amalgamate weak regiments belonging to one county. The right hon. Gentleman said last year that two years training were insufficient to produce efficiency in the Militia. The regiments in his constituency were recruited from potters and miners, and any scheme which demanded two years for recruiting and training instead of two or three months would never be successful in obtaining the men who now joined the Militia. It would be just as difficult to get officers. The Militia had never recovered from the wastages occasioned by the South African War. Many men passed through the ranks into the Line; many were killed or died, and many left their regiments because it was not possible for them to run the risk of having to go out for a two years period of service. He would suggest that in this matter the Militia should be kept on practically the same lines as at present, but they should have longer recruiting training, and every three years at least there should be a longer annual period of training. Above all, there should be an end put to the present uncertainty with regard to the position of the Militia. If the War Secretary or the Army Council could suggest a course by which the Militia could be utilised by being made co-ordinate with the other forces of the Army and the officers made acquainted with what they had to do, they would come forward in all parts of the country and fill the gaps at present existing in the Militia force.

*MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Woodstock) said that although he was unable to fully support the views advanced with regard to the training of boys at school, though having much sympathy with the Clifton College Engineering School, still an experience of over forty years in connection with Volunteers in public schools, and the class corps and the Universities, told him that something special ought to be done with regard to the so-called class corps. They complained of a shortage of officers and were asked to find a trained Reserve. He did not hesitate to say that a Reserve trained in elementary work of all arms of the service, and treated at drill not as privates but in the *rôle* in rotation of sergeants and officers capable of going forward in any time, ought to be watched with care; and such, he believed, was to be found in the University corps, or could be raised there. They had athletic and intelligent young men there who would train on very quickly, but as it was desirable to have competent adjutants and trainers in order to make the best of the good material found in those corps, he could not support a reduction in money grant, but thought he might urge its better application. These young men trained should soon fulfil almost any requirement of the Army in the field, and could be quickly made into efficient officers in any Army. He had for some time the command of the Oxford University Corps and had trained young fellows as officers in many different directions. He had often a dozen men aiming at the Regular forces attached to the corps while keeping their University terms, and most of the officers held the P.S.; this seemed the nucleus of a school for trained reserve as officers. If the War Secretary were to put before men of that standard while at the University an opportunity of dealing not alone with drill but with the different sections of work required in the field, he would find that interest would be developed, and that the men who voted drill alone a bore would give a great deal of care and attention to a wider scheme of work. This class of men ought to be considered in any scheme for a remodelled Volunteer service. The Universities, Inns of Court and class corps might work together on similar lines, and be a source whence all arms might draw half-finished material to work up to meet shortage of officers. He would especially note mounted infantry, cyclist, machine gun—service rifle and small bore—scouting, mapping, signalling, tactics, bridging, half-scale earthworks. Education on most of these lines was of value in the University work as well as in that for Army service. Knowledge of the applied science attached made men fit and serviceable, handy men for the country either at home or in the Colonies. If there was a possibility of doing something of this kind in the college training, these men would never be set aside, unless to put on another plane for special attention. It was clearly reasonable that special consideration should be given to the Universities as centres of education forming a trained reserve of officers available for the auxiliary corps generally, yet who would be capable of assisting in a special way when called upon to furnish juniors for service with Regulars in the field.

Mr. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield Ecclesall) called attention to the equipment of the West York Artillery, who were at the present moment armed with sixteen antiquated muzzle-loading guns. He had put several Questions on this subject to the War Secretary, but up to the present no satisfactory reply had been given, and it appeared that there were no modern guns available for this corps. He would request the right hon. Gentleman to try and bring this question to a conclusion. A feeling of uncertainty was not fair and it impaired the efficiency of the corps. They ought to be properly equipped if they were required, and if, on the other hand, they were not required they should be informed of the fact.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 191; Noes, 234. (Division List No. 101.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, G. M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)

Duffy, William J.
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,CaptEC(S.Andrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, A. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir ArthurD.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharpe
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman

Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morley,Rt.Hon.John(Montrose
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, J. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan, V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, H. L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, RtHn.C.R.(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, J. C. (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York,W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, A. W. (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Fred.W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, H. J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. W.(Worcestersh.N.
Woodhouse,SirJT.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Major Seely and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir Wm. Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,Rt.Hn.A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.

Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir A. H. (Shropsh.)
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell,Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.

Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hon. J. (Birm.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, C. C. (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred

Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, Wm. Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Fielden, Edw. Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fred'k.
Gordon, Hn J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (Tr. Hamlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E W (B'ry S Edm'nds)
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords. N.W.)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W,)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick W.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, J. G. (Yorks. N.R.)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, F. N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. F. (Lowestoft)
Lucas, R. J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. P. (Darlington)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edw.
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.
Seely, C. Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, Wm. Edw. T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H. C. (North'mb. T'neside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said he regretted it was necessary to move a reduction of £500 in the Vote in order to call attention to an injustice and an indiscretion on the part of the War Office in regard to their treatment of Highland regiments. In the course he was taking he claimed that he was humbly following the steps of his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War who, when he sat on these benches, brought forward grievances under which he believed the different branches of the Army and Navy were suffering after having made his own personal investigation and after obtaining private information which led him to believe they were substantial. He wished to call attention to the Army Order of 6th January, 1905, and the effect of its promulgation upon the *morale* of the Highland regiments. That Order dealt with the grouping of regimental depôts under separate and new commands, and it was of the Scottish command that he wished to speak, and more particularly of the Highland and the Lowland groups. The Highland group had all the Highland regiments in it with the exception of one, and that regiment was the second senior regiment of what he might call the Highland Brigade, a regiment whose military prowess was not surpassed in history, and which was the proud possessor of more battle honours than any other regiment in Europe. It was the Highland Light Infantry which it was now proposed should be omitted from the Highland group. It was this regiment whose grievance the right hon. Gentleman said he did not understand.

He would explain that grievance to the Committee. In the first place, after a close investigation, he was prepared to state that the Highland Light Infantry contained as many Highlanders, if not more, as any other regiment in the Highland Brigade. He wished emphatically to say that no Highlanders objected to the Highland Light Infantry temporarily serving with the Lowland regiments; they would equally object if they were grouped with the Guards or any other regiment whose traditions and history were foreign to that of the Highland Light Infantry, and they asked that this regiment should be grouped in its proper place in the Highland Brigade. Therefore they asked for the cancellation of this Orders so far as it affected Scotland; it had given great offence throughout the length and breadth of Scotland. They also desired to have an official assurance that from now onwards the Highland Light Infantry should be classed as a regiment in the Highland Brigade, and that there should in future be no question as to whether it was a Highland or a Lowland regiment. Nobody knew better than the Secretary of State for War the value to recruiting and to general efficiency of preserving in a regiment the historical and territorial distinctions of that regiment. He remembered that in Liverpool last year the right hon. Gentleman set himself up as the great evangelist of territorial traditions, and he declared that he would do all he could to maintain and preserve them. If his right hon. friend thought he knew the value of such traditions and memories for English and Irish regiments, then he could tell him what he knew, and what many hon. Members knew, namely, that the Scottish people, and the Highlanders especially, revered their martial memories with a fervour and intensity which perhaps was not known on this side of the border. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that this was some newfangled fable, but he could assure him that it was a grievance of long standing. These grievances dated back to 1881 when Mr. Childers removed the Highland Light Infantry depôts from Fort George to Hamilton. But Mr. Childers accompanied that removal with an assurance that there would be no difference made in the Highland *status* of the Highland Light Infantry. That assurance was more grateful to the ears of Highlanders than the totally erroneous statement of the Secretary of State that the Highland Light Infantry were in all essentials a Lowland regiment.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I never said so.

Mr. MALCOLM said the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Highland Light Infantry were recruited mainly from the Lowlanders, and that statement was totally inaccurate. At that time there was a considerable outcry against the removal of the Highland Light Infantry, and it had continued ever since. If the Secretary of State for War took the same trouble now to discover what the feelings of these regiments were as he took when he sat on these benches, he would find beyond all possibility of contradiction or doubt that a very considerable feeling existed in Scotland upon this point. But, it might be asked, Why was it, in face of all this discontent, that recruiting had not fallen off? The reason was that since the year 1881 there had been a great influx into Glasgow of West Highlanders in consequence of the increasing poverty and agricultural depression, and now about three-fifths of the Glasgow population was Highland. Not only the Highland Light Infantry but other Highland regiments drew more recruits from Glasgow than from any Highland area. Therefore it was no argument to say that this regiment alone was now mainly recruited from the Lowlands. The second occasion upon which the Highland Light Infantry considered themselves aggrieved was during the South African War, when the Highland Light Infantry were removed from the Highland Brigade in order to make room for the 2nd. Battalion of Gordon Highlanders at the instance of General Sir Hector Macdonald. This was considered to be an insult to the Highland Light Infantry. That insult might have been voluntary or involuntary, and he believed it was involuntary. Nevertheless there was a real feeling about it and the wound rankled still, and this new Army Order made it sting all the more. Therefore Scotsmen found themselves complaining against this unnecessary laceration by the War Office of Scottish feeling. They noticed with alarm these periodical onslaughts of the War Office upon the Highland Light Infantry, and the public were beginning to imagine that the Highland Light Infantry was not a Highland regiment at all. The other day the Lord Provost of Edinburgh asked that a Highland regiment and not a Highland Light Infantry regiment should be quartered at Edinburgh. That was an illustration of the public idea at the present time, owing mainly to the action of the War Office. And, having stated that he believed the Highland Light Infantry to be composed mainly of Lowlanders, the right hon. Gentleman did have the courage of his opinion, and he grouped the Highland Light Infantry with Lowland regiments, making it part of the permanent arrangement under the scheme of July 14th of last year. The other day the right hon. Gentleman told them that the regimental depôts were to go, so that the Highland Light Infantry would be under one roof with Lowland regiments. It was firmly believed that, those two groups having been made in the North and South, the officer commanding each group would be responsible for, and have control of, the promotion of officers and men up to and including the rank of captain. It was also firmly believed that he would make the officers and men of each group interchangeable. That would only be adding insult to injury. The officers and men of the Highland Light Infantry had nothing but pride in serving with Lowland regiments, but they would very much object to being interchanged with the Lowland regiments. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would pay attention to the protest he now made on behalf of a great number of Highlanders, a great number of Celtic societies, and old members of the Highland Light Infantry. It was a protest which was widely supported. He earnestly hoped the Secretary of State would be able to give them the assurance they asked, that the Highland Light Infantry should remain part of the Highland Brigade, and also that he would find it possible to administer the regiment from Perth, and not from Hamilton in the Lowland group. He had been assured by officers in high position, who had lately been removed from the War Office, that no administrative difficulty would arise. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State both knew how nearly unanimous Scottish feeling was on this point. They knew what a wealth of material had been supplied to the Empire by Scotsmen ever since the Union. They were keen Imperialists, he was sure they would allow that only a lukewarm Scotsman could possibly submit to this grouping of the Highland Light Infantry, and they would agree that a bad Scotsman could never make a good Imperialist. He hoped the Secretary of State in his reply would not belittle this question and say it was a matter of mere sentiment. After all, sentiment ruled the world. Patriotism was sentiment, reverence was sentiment, and *esprit de corps* was sentiment. It was for sentiment that we celebrated Trafalgar, Balaclava, and Ladysmith. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman's answer would do something to assuage the feelings he had wounded. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,100,500, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Malcolm.*)

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER assured his hon. friend that he was as sensible as he of the importance attaching to all sentiment connected with the Army and more especially to that of Scotsmen. If there had been any fault in this matter it had not originated with himself. He did not suppose that his hon. friend seriously imputed to the War Office, since 1881, a desire to put a slight on the Highland Light Infantry, which was one of the most distinguished regiments in the Army, and had, he believed, more names on its colours than any other regiment. Such an idea would not enter the mind of any sane man, let alone anyone connected with the War Office, which contained many Scottish soldiers. Since he had been at the War Office he had succeeded, in many cases, in doing justice to regimental feeling. The hon. Member was really under a misapprehension. There had been no change at all; the Highland Light Infantry depôt was placed at Hamilton in 1881, but for war purposes they were not dissociated from any Highland regiment. They were, and must be, intrinsically a Highland regiment. The Report of the Esher Committee recommended that for administrative purposes certain districts should be assigned. Those districts, for the necessary buying of forage and stores, must be geographically adjacent or self-contained. It was necessary to divide Scotland into these administrative districts. As a matter of fact Hamilton was in the Lowlands and the Highland Light Infantry had been put into that district for administrative purposes. If he could, he would gladly suggest any other nomenclature that might be more agreeable to Scottish feeling, but they could not get over the fact that Hamilton was in the Lowlands.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

INDIRECT TAXES ON FOOD.

Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said his first word in regard to the Resolution he now had the honour to move would be one of regret that in this year of grace 1905, there should be need for a Resolution of this character, but the political needs of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and not the political needs of the nation, were the real cause. They were the danger signal to cheap food in this country. The right hon. Gentleman had had the onus cast upon him of endevouring to show that his political needs and those of the nation were the same. In this he had failed, for no man with any sense of proportion could give equal value and importance to the respective needs. In making his fiscal proposals the Member for West Birmingham had set before himself a difficult task. He had to face great difficulties of fact and experience. To propose an increase in the price of food at the present time in the United Kingdom, after sixty years of comparative cheapness and plenty, was to revive the sad and dismal memories of what were called the "hungry forties." To propose such an increase at the present time was to set some, who still lived and recollected those evil days, others who lived in the traditions of their fathers and grandfathers, and others again who read history and thought intelligently, asking what could be the urgent need of this reactionary and retrogressive proposal. It was difficult to conceive any great national emergency, however acute, which could justify such a policy. This was the most important branch of the fiscal question. Neither retaliation, negotiation, conference, or preference, were it possible to separate any of those items from the tangled proposals of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, would go so straight at the vital interest of the people as the proposal to tax their food. This was a working man's and working woman's question. A question for those whose labour was their only capital, who had to live from hand to mouth on weekly wages, and who were driven by the commonest prudence to reckon how every penny was to be spent. It was a deadly blow to those whose food was the raw material of their labour.

His proposition alleged that taxation of food was especially burdensome on the poor. Who were the poor whom he sought to protect from the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham? According to the excellent book written by Mr. Booth in 1889, nearly one-third of the population of London were living on a weekly income of 21s.—the average size of the family kept upon that sum being the man, his wife, and two children, while Mr. Rowntree told them that there were in York 7,000 persons, out of a total population of 46,000, who lived on less than 21s. a week for a man, his wife, and three children. In England and Wales, according to the recently published Board of Trade Report, the average wage of the agricultural labourer was only 17s. 5d., out of which the amount spent for food alone was 13s. 6d., what room was there here for dearer food and where was the justification for the sacrifice such people were to face if the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham were accepted? He agreed with what Lord Goschen had said, that this was a "gamble" in the people's food and a risk which the House of Commons would not permit the people to take. But they were, nevertheless, face to face with this proposal, and his Resolution, which he hoped by midnight would be a registered record of this House, was a Resolution that under the hand and guidance of the Prime Minister ought to have been submitted to the House of Commons within forty-eight hours of the first declaration of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham that he meant to tax the food of the people.

The right hon. Member for West Birmingham had varied the text of his discourse from time to time. Great inducements had at first been held out to the workers to accept his policy in the promises he made to them of old-age pensions and increased wages. These have faded away under discussion. The inducement now was a "united Empire," but though that might be a grand ideal, its grandeur would not be enhanced or increased if it came to be contemplated by a hungry and underfed people, who, under such circumstances, might regard Imperial unity as a very doubtful asset. It appeared to him that if the right hon. Gentleman desired to rouse in the people of this country a spirit of patriotism he was going the wrong way about it, the working man was beginning to ask, "Is it quite certain that if my food is taxed this great Empire will be consolidated." If a united Empire is to be brought about by this home suffering of our very poor, it is quite certain that it will soon be regarded as a luxury only of the rich by those upon whose sacrifice it is built up. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham made a great many proposals, but that which might be called the considered proposal was the one he made at Glasgow, when he proposed to put a 2s. duty on foreign corn, a corresponding duty on flour, a small tax of 5 per cent. on foreign meat and dairy produce, and to give a substantial preference to the Colonies in respect of wines and perhaps Colonial fruits. This was to cost the labourer 4d. a week more, and the artisan 5d. a week more, but he proposed to give back what he took from them in that way by a remission of duties on tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa. Even if they accepted—which they did not—the figures of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, the labourer and the artisan would be no better off than before this so called "scientific readjustment" of taxation—which he preferred to call a jerry-mandering operation—began. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to remit taxation on tea, sugar, cocoa, and coffee, but those taxes were not the right hon. Gentleman's to play with. They were already mortgaged to the people—they belonged to the people, they were the property of the people long before the right hon. Gentleman's scheme was propounded. They were war taxes imposed for the purposes of the late war by two successive Chancellors of the Exchequer, and when the war was over, the people had as much right to have those taxes returned to them as the income-tax payer had to have that tax reduced. The key to the right hon. Gentleman's proposal was the power to remit these taxes, and so compensate the workers for the taxes he proposed to put upon their corn, meat, and dairy produce. If the people of this country had a right to have that tax returned, it was not by the condescension of the right hon. Gentleman, but by their own right. If the power to remit this taxation was taken away, then the scheme of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham collapsed like a house of cards. The people were not only entitled to have their cheap tea, sugar, cocoa, and coffee, but cheap corn, meat butter and cheese as well. That was their right, and it was the business of this House to protect it.

The Prime Minister when speaking upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Argyleshire offered an excuse for having moved the previous Question on the Motion of the hon. Member for Oldham. He said—

> "I set the Government Whips in motion: I thought, and still think, this House ought not to set the example of passing a Resolution which would prevent the Colonial Conference from being free."

But if the Motion of the previous Question were justified, then it was more so now by the refusal of the House to-day to accept the taxation of food which the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham agreed lay at the root of colonial preference. Where was the Prime Minister now to defend the freedom of this Colonial Conference, for this Resolution thus deliberately made against that freedom, so far as the taxation of food was concerned? The whole of the Unionist Party seemed to have taken as a new motto that "one pair of heels is worth two pairs of hands." If anything was to be done for colonial preference in conference, it must be based upon concessions by both parties to the agreement. The mother country was to be called upon to negotiate with the Colonies in an attempt to arrive at an agreement in regard to Colonial preference, but she was to go into that conference with the condition precedent that she was to concede something which she could neither tolerate nor bear, and that was the taxation of food. On the other hand, the Colonies were asked to go into the negotiations, well knowing that they had also a condition precedent which could not be conceded. They had their young and growing industries, and they must keep out the competition of foreign countries by import duties unless they wished these industries to be swept out of existence. Therefore, they had two parties to negotiate under conditions which were impossible. Then what was the good of this conference? Both parties were called upon to enter into it with their hands tied. What was the good of entering into a fruitless conference which could bring only irritation, jealousy and disappointment. Now where were the independent members of the Unionist Party to-day? This is a question of the taxation of the food of the people. Surely there ought to be sufficient independence among the supporters of the Government to induce them to vote against the taxation of the food of the people. The people in this country regarded this question as of vital interest, and they would certainly say that "he who is not with us is against us" in this vote.

Where was the policy of the Member for West Birmingham to lead to? The moment they allowed protective duties to begin, there was no telling where they would end. The working man of this country had found the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham out. The working man thought that the right hon. Gentleman had been trying to fill his mouth with empty spoons—he was tired of the right hon. Gentleman trying to tickle his throat with a feather, and making a fool of his stomach—he saw that the right hon. Gentleman's windmill had dwindled down to a nutcracker, that his speeches were those of a man who was desperate, his actions — the actions of one who was seeking to avoid the evil spirit of protection which he himself had raised. The opponents of free trade talked with disparagement of the antiquated shibboleths of free trade, which brought in their train peace, happiness, and contentment. But they forgot that there was a policy even older than free trade, and that was protection.

Protection too had its antiquated shibboleths and in their train came misery, discontent, and starvation. These, alas, our people had known but too well. Might heaven preserve them from the revival and resurrection of the accursed thing—protection. He begged to move.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln) said he wished that some one more competent than himself had been selected to second the Resolution of which the overwhelming majority of the House and of the country was in favour at the present time. He believed that after the next general election such a Resolution would be supported by a still larger majority in the House than it would be that night, and that on any future occasion when the subject came to be discussed they would not see any empty benches either on one side or the other of the House. He regretted—they all regretted—that these "missionaries of Empire," whose fervent eloquence had resounded in their ears and filled the newspapers during the last few years, had not deigned to include this House within the range of their efforts. He did not know their reason—whether it was that they thought free-traders were past redemption, or whether the somewhat coldly critical atmosphere of the Chamber was not altogether propitious to the per-fervid eloquence suitable to a mission—eloquence apt to be a little lurid as to language and a little careless as to facts.

As the hon. and learned Member who had so ably moved the Resolution had stated, they might have anticipated that a Resolution relating to the Colonial Conference would have been moved either in the session of 1903 as a preliminary to the commencement of the mission in the country, or last session at the conclusion of it, and that they would have had a straightforward issue presented in a Resolution advocating preferential duties for the Colonies and involving the taxation of food. But nothing of the kind had occurred. It was true enough that whenever the Gentlemen who advocated this policy were able to cajole or compel the Government to represent that their interests were involved in the matter, then they favoured the House with their presence; but when the ægis of the Government was withdrawn from them they had, with one or two brilliant exceptions, taken but little part in these debates. Well, though they might regret it, they were not misled by it. Neither was the country misled by it, nor would our brethren in the Colonies be misled by it. Did anyone doubt, if those who had advocated this policy had had the smallest chance of carrying a Resolution in the House in its favour, or even of making such a fair show of strength as would have given them a reasonable prospect of success in the future, that they would have come forward and advocated it openly? They knew well, and every man in this country and in the Colonies knew, that the reason why these Gentlemen were absent that night was not the reason set forth in the Amendment which had been placed on the Paper that afternoon, although the hon. Member in whose name it was was not present to move it. The reason given in the Amendment for their absence was that they disapproved of abstract Resolutions. That was not the real reason. The real reason was not that they disapproved of the passing of abstract Resolutions, but the fact that they were unable to prevent them being passed, as the Resolution which he was seconding would be passed that night.

The Resolution embodied a self-evident proposition on the face of it. Who was there in this country who would really wish to put a tax on corn, meat, and dairy produce? Corn was the food of all the people, more particularly of the poorest. Meat was the food on which our workmen relied for giving them that strength which had made them the best workmen in the civilised world. And as regarded dairy produce, no one who took an interest in the social condition of the people would wish to do anything to increase the cost or diminish the consumption of milk. One great fault in our social arrangements was the fact that over large parts of the country the consumption of milk by children was not sufficiently large. Social economists had always known it, but it had been proved in an inquiry, the results of which were published a short time ago. A larger quantity of milk was taken by children in the northern than in the southern parts of England, and anything which would tend to increase the price of this most valuable food would be an injury to the future of the country altogether. It was desirable, therefore, that they should place on record what their opinions were with respect to those proposals, which had been placed before the country, and might be brought forward at the future Colonial Conference. Such a conference was held some years ago, but as to what happened at it there was no accurate information. He was not clear whether any demands had been made upon this country by those present at the conference, but, to borrow a phrase from electrical science, he gathered that there was some sort of magnetic field which surrounded the Colonial Premiers and which induced some currents in the mind of the late Colonial Secretary which caused that right hon. Gentleman to contemplate at the time, and to advocate afterwards, a policy of taxation of food and preferential duties to the Colonies which years ago he would have regarded with objection, he might almost say with dismay.

The argument had been used that this country would gain so largely by giving preferential duties to the Colonies that it would be worth our while to suffer some loss in order to obtain preferences from the Colonies in return. It was difficult to ascertain with real accuracy what the chances were of any gain being obtained from colonial preferences. There were two kinds of Colonies—one in which we had equal advantages with all our rivals, and the other in which we had some advantages which our rivals had not. No colonial preference could alter the disadvantage of geographical position, as in the case of Canada; but take the case of Australia and the Cape, where we had a fair and equal chance with all our trade rivals and neighbours. What were the real facts? The largest of the Australian Colonies was New South Wales; it was a free-trade Colony, and therefore there were no disturbing elements of taxation of trade there. Our share of its trade was 65 per cent. of the whole, and that was a little less than the average for the whole of Australia. Eliminating all articles such as petroleum, rice, tea, etc., which this country could not itself produce, and leaving in all the numerous articles in the manufacture of which other countries had advantages over this, although we produced them also, then our share of the trade with New South Wales was 74 per cent., or three-fourths of the total trade. In Natal we had, in 1901, 79 per cent. on the total trade; in Cape Colony we had 84 per cent. Now, take the great staple trades of this country—cotton, woollen goods, iron. In New South Wales we had 95 per cent. of the cotton trade in 1901; 89 per cent. of the trade in clothes; 77 per cent. of the trade in iron goods; and 78 per cent. in 1902; and of woollen goods, 94 per cent. in 1901, and 91 per cent. in 1902. In Cape Colony we had 97 per cent. in 1901 of the trade in woollen goods; 93 per cent. of the trade in linen goods; 94 per cent. of the trade in cotton goods; and 82 per cent. in the trade in iron and steel. In Natal our trade was 96 per cent. of the total trade in woollen goods; 94 per cent. in linen goods; 84 per cent. in cotton goods; and 80 per cent. in iron and steel goods. Well, what was the proportion of the trade of our competitors? Germany had 3 per cent. of the woollen trade, and 2 per cent. of the cotton trade in New South Wales. In Victoria, Germany had 5 per cent. of the woollen trade and 4 per cent. of the cotton trade. What prospect was there of gain on these staple trades by giving preferential duties to the Colonies in comparison with the injury which would be caused by taxes on our food?

In Canada the position was different, and he had a suspicion that it was in Canada that a great portion of the basis for this theory of preferences was to be found. He was sorry to say that there was rather a tendency on the part of the "missionaries" to be a little careless as to their facts in regard to Canada. There had not been that accuracy in regard to facts that he would have liked to have seen in a matter of this importance. Our trade with Canada since the preference had increased very largely, and numbers of people had been going round the country saying that the increase was due to the preference. Well, Canada had increased enormously in the last five years in wealth and population, and so her trade had increased, and, of course, preference or no preference, our trade with her would increase also; but the whole question of the value of the preference lay in the relative amount of the trade. Now, before the preference was given our trade with Canada was 27 per cent. of the whole Canadian trade; but since preference it had varied between 23 and 25 per cent., and on the preference we had no increase in our relative share of her trade. He did not mean to say that there was not an advantage in Canada giving us a preference; but the gain had not been of that large character which would justify anyone in saying that any real substantial advantage had resulted from it. He was sorry that the Secretary of the Board of Trade was not present, as he did not like to speak of him in his absence; but that right hon. Gentleman, speaking at Warrington a week or two ago, cited the fact that our trade percentage with Canada had not increased, and the reason of that was a large increase in the American trade. The American trade, however, said the right hon. Gentleman, should not be taken into account, because the trade between Canada and America was mainly in raw materials, with which we did not compete. Well, he thought it worth while to look and see; and he found that the value of the imports into Canada from the United Kingdom of manufactured articles was 41,000,000 dollars, and the value of the imports of manufactured articles from the United States was 52,000,000 dollars. He did not think that the explanation as to the American imports being entirely raw materials, was one which altered much the percentage of our trade with Canada; but it showed that there was no real advantage to be gained from preference. He did not wish to be held to minimise the kindly intentions of Canada in giving us preference, but he did say that it had not resulted in any such increase in our trade as would justify our running serious risks in order to tax our food.

It was clear that while we could not hope to gain very much by preference to the Colonies, much injury might be done to our general trade. When preference was first put before the country in 1903 they were told that the compensation to working men for taxing their food was that there would be a large increase in trade with the Colonies, and that that would be followed by an increase in wages; but in October last it was put forth to the country that the working men were no longer to rely on an increase of wages but on the taking off of the taxes on tea, coffee, and sugar as a compensation for a tax being put on their food. The fallacy which underlay that proposal had already been exposed by his hon. and learned friend; but there was an Amendment on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Liverpool, although the hon. Gentleman had not had the courage to come and support it. In that Amendment the hon. Gentleman said—

"In the opinion of this House, the burden of local and other taxation presses unduly upon the food-producing and manufacturing industries of this country, and should, as far as practicable, be transferred to foreign importations."

That was rather a come-down from the great policy that was to unite the mother country with the Colonies. It now appeared that the only thing that was to unite the mother country and the Colonies was to reduce the expense of the parish pump. Still, though this policy afforded no prospect of advantaging the trade of the country, it had to be met and fought. He gave every credit to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that he did not bring it forward and advocate it from any selfish motive, but with the object of uniting more closely the Colonies and the mother country. But there was nothing new about that policy. The right hon. Gentleman often said "Why is it that we treat our Colonies differently from the way that other nations treat their colonies, with whom they have preferential arrangements?" The reason was clear; we had had experience in the past of arrangements of that kind, and we had profited by the experience that we had gained. He would like to read to the House an extract from the King's Speech 140 years ago, which, he thought, showed that there were men before the right hon. Gentleman who held his opinion as to the desirability of uniting the

Colonies with us by means of duties. In 1766 in the King's Speech there appeared the following passage—

> "The many regulations you have made for extending and promoting the trade and manufactures of Great Britain and for settling the mutual intercourse of My kingdom and plantations in such a manner as to provide for the improvement of Our Colonies on the plan of due subordination to the commercial interests of the mother country, are the strongest proofs of your comprehensive regard to the welfare of all My dominions—an object truly worthy of the British Parliament. It shall be My endeavour that such care be taken as may tend to secure the improvements and advantages which may be expected from such wise and salutory provisions."

The Parliament which heard that King's Speech of 1766 was equally anxious to do justice to the Colonies as was the present Parliament. They were prorogued after that Speech and met in the following November, and proceeded to pass a tea duty on the United States of America. They passed it without debate, but it was a preferential tea duty, and although they passed it without debate it was not without consideration. When it was objected to shortly afterwards they complained bitterly of the objection, because they said that although it was nominally a duty of 3d. in the £, to the consumers in America, really, owing to the arrangement with India, it was a bonus of 9d. in the £. And that was true, because those in America who objected to the duty threw the tea into the Boston Harbour, not because it was dear, but because it was cheap, and if landed it would bribe the people in the Colonies to consent to duties being placed upon them by the Parliament in London. Those who lost us the Empire of the world 140 years ago were actuated by similar principles and similar ideas of commercial policy, and of the influence and result of taxation, as those who were at the back of these principles now. Those men had undertaken a long war for the colony, and were anxious to place a share of the burden on the Colonies across the seas. There were men taking part in this agitation now who wished to put forward as a portion of it the necessity for the Colonies assisting in reducing the burdens of this country and of placing some of these burdens on the Colonies, and of bribing by preferential duties some sections and classes of people in the Colonies to assist them in that policy. Our fathers and grandfathers had profited by experience, and by establishing entire fiscal independence as between the Colonies and ourselves they had created this great Empire. He asked the House to pass this Resolution because it was true in itself, and because it was a declaration to the Colonies of our opinion on the matter. It was only by a clear and plain statement on the part of all concerned as to their wishes, desires, and hopes that in this or any other matter the Colonial Conference in 1906, or any other conference, could possibly succeed in strengthening and increasing those bonds of unity between the Colonies and the mother country, which it was the object of that House and the Empire to increase, strengthen, and improve.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House disapproves on principle of the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce, as being especially burdensome to the poor and injurious to the welfare of the nation; and believes that no proportionate remission from existing duties on tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa would afford compensation for the imposition of such taxes; and declares its opinion that any Colonial Conference that is entered upon, except on the understanding that this country will not agree to the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce, will result in failure.—(*Sir Joseph Leese.*)

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) rose to support the Resolution and to ask a few Questions. It had been very difficult indeed to meet face to face the people who had been promoting this great fiscal policy throughout the country. Their own speeches had been misinterpreted, and they were told that they did not understand this question. He quite admitted that it needed a cultivated intellect to understand all the proposals which had been put forward in its favour, and as he laid no claim to cultivated intellect he desired to ask a few plain Questions, thinking that was the best place in which to ask them. They were told that they were wanting in Imperial instinct and in the desire to draw closer together the kinship which existed between the Colonies and the mother country; also that they should be prepared to make some sacrifices. It occurred to him that when sons and daughters went abroad they did so exceedingly well for themselves that they did not expect post office orders from the poor old folks at home. The kinship of Empire could not be cemented on a pounds, shillings, and pence basis. He did not feel assured of the honesty of this fiscal agitation. One could understand an honest opponent who said "My friend, you are wrong," but during the last two years they had been waiting to have other questions answered, and instead of paying attention to home matters that ought to be studied, their minds had been occupied with this fiscal bogey. In the early stages of the agitation they were told that if the proposals were to be made the law of the land the workmen would benefit by receiving increased wages. At his end of the town when the workmen were told that they were going to have an addition of 2s. 6d. a week to their wages they were so sceptical that they asked, "Do you think Mr. Chamberlain would lend us a bit on account?" There were plenty of South African millionaires in this country who might help in the unemployed question, but whose efforts were directed to raising the price of the food of the people.

Another proposal was to tax manufactured articles coming into this country and thus make no less a sum than £9,000,000 which might be devoted to old-age pensions. They were also told that by taxation those goods would be kept out of the country. His intellect failed to grasp how they would make £9,000,000 out of goods which were to be kept out of the country, and he was of opinion that the myth of old-age pensions had gone with the rest of the myths which had been put before their notice. The hon Member for Sheffield (Sir Howard Vincent) who was the first and last of the tariff reformers—had called the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that £100,000,000 worth of manufactured goods were brought into this country, and, deploring the amount of unemployment, had suggested that if those £100,000,000 worth of goods were made at home there would be plenty of work for the unemployed. We, however, exported £200,000,000 worth of manufactured goods, and it had to be considered that if we hit out at the £100,000,000 of imports we were liable to be hit through the £200,000,000 of exports. No doubt if we kept out the £100,000,000 worth of manufactured goods we should have something to do, but we should also have plenty of time in which to do it, because we should lose £200,000,000 whilst making £100,000,000.

Mr. Crooks.

Then they were told that the foreigners would be made to pay for the home markets. On one occasion Mr. Chamberlain had said that every halfpenny placed on the necessaries of life in the shape of market charges made it the more difficult for the humble people of the nation to live. But they were now told that if the foreigner had to pay the charges there was no need for them to trouble in the matter. What would happen when the foreigner made everything and sent it to this country for nothing? They would join the ranks of those who toiled not, neither did they spin. They would have nothing to complain about, but would live in the lap of luxury for ever.

But why should they not be practical? Was the House always to be used in order to make the rich richer, and to insist that the poor should always want to have their needs redressed. If they were to give a preference to the Colonies by the taxation of meat, it would follow that colonial meat would be dearer, and the poorest of the poor would have to do with a smaller quantity, and thus make a sacrifice for the benefit of the Colonies. Another question he had to ask was with reference to Colonial wheat. He understood that whilst our Colonies sent 19,000,000 cwts. of wheat to us every year, the United States sent 73,000,000 cwts., and yet, in the interests of the Colonies who only sent 19,000,000 cwts., we were to tax 73,000,000 cwts. and to pay more for our bread. Then he would ask those responsible for the fiscal proposals how did they propose to discriminate between the United States and Canadian wheat. We used the United States ports for shipment in the winter, and the Canadian ports in the summer, the result being that a very large carrying trade was done between those ports in the summer time. How would it then be possible to stop the United States growers from smuggling part of their 73,000,000 cwts. into the Canadian ports? Then, again, how would the Canadian authorities like us to interfere with their trade? They were told not to trouble about little pettifogging details which they did not understand, but he could assert that so far as wealth was concerned we were now better off than ever we were before. In 1849 there were 202,265 able-bodied outdoor paupers in England or 11·7 per 1,000 of the population; in 1872 there were 128,000 or 5·6 per 1,000, and in 1904, when they were told that they were absolutely ruined, there were only 62,509, or 1·9 per 1,000. There was no justification for this agitation. He hoped the Resolution would be carried unanimously, and that the House would say to the nation that no matter what might happen in the future if they were going to build up an Imperial race it should not be done by taxing their food.

Mr. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale) said that as the hon. Member for Woolwich announced that he wished to ask a few Questions of the advocates of tariff reform, he in turn would interrogate the hon. Member on one or two points. Was not the hon. Member a trade unionist?

Mr. CROOKS: I am exactly in the same position as a lawyer protecting his own interests.

Mr. CLAUDE LOWTHER said that surely protection was the essence of trade unionism. ["Oh, oh!"] Would the hon. Member object to the introduction of foreign miners, for example, into the country? [Several Hon. Members: Chinese?] He was talking of England at the present time. Would the hon. Member object to the introduction of cheap foreign workmen—yes or no? The hon. Member could not answer.

Mr. CROOKS: I do not think this is the time or place, but I can answer.

Mr. CLAUDE LOWTHER hoped the hon. Member, then, would answer at some other time, and he would wait his reply with interest. Hon. Members opposite opposed preferential tariffs from a sincere determination to combat any policy which they believed would increase the cost of living to the working classes. He gave them credit for that intention; might he ask in return to be believed when he said that if he thought a preferential policy would have that effect he would not champion it? He was as much opposed as anyone to increasing the price of living of the working classes, but one fact had convinced him that if our present system of fiscal isolation was maintained the price of the people's food must rise in the future, and that very considerably. At present we relied, to a great extent for cheap wheat upon the excess production of the United States. But the United States was gradually filling up; the virgin soil was decreasing. There was a rapidly increasing population in that country to feed, and it followed as a natural corollary that the price of wheat from the United States must rise in the near future. Therefore, it was the bounden duty of all who had the welfare of the people at heart to stimulate by every means the production of wheat elsewhere, and not only in the Colonies, as the only sure protection against expensive food at home. The House should bear in mind the fierce competition of the last two decades for the markets of the world. One by one the neutral markets had been absorbed by protectionist countries, and at this very moment, when the Colonies offered us a splendid outlet for industrial and commercial enterprise, and when the countries of the world were all trending towards consolidation, should we alone of all nations stand back from the supreme movement of the age because the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich had levelled his telescope at the Imperial sun and discovered a speck or two upon its face? Although the meridian of Greenwich regulated our time, his noble friend would find it difficult to put back and keep back the hands of the clock.

It would be almost suicidal to refuse the offer of the Colonies. ["What offer?"] The offer of a free conference, for one thing. Already they were our best customers—["No."]—

and when the infant communities of to-day became the giant communities of the future it would be difficult to measure the prosperity of that country—he hoped it might be Great Britain—which was able to keep pace with their growing demands. Many of the Opposition leaders now believed that a conference would be helpful, but possibly that was because they had discovered that they dare not oppose it in the country although it might lead to the ultimate success of the principles which would give the *coup de grace* to their policies and prophecies. It was unfair to attempt to cripple the conference before it was formed. Such a conference, constituted as it would be of the leaders of thought from the corners of the world, ought to be free to discuss any and every matter of interest between the mother country and the Colonies, but the Opposition apparently desired that the question of paramount importance, that of freer trade, should be barred. Apart from the absurdity of the position, it was nothing short of insolence to turn to the Colonies, when commercialism was the touchstone of the world's politics, and say, "You have come perhaps 20,000 miles. Make yourselves quite at home. Talk about the weather, discuss the constitution of the next Radical Cabinet, compare the manners of Lord Chesterfield and of the junior Member for Oldham; you may talk about anything you like except the one policy you have come to discuss, viz., the question of freer trade between us and the Colonies." He protested against the terms of this Resolution.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): Will you vote against it?

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER: Certainly. He protested against the terms of the Resolution because he thought it prejudiced the issue and pre-judged the question.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The hon. Member who has just spoken did not hear the powerful speech made by the hon. Member for Lincoln in seconding the Resolution, or I think he would have struck out of his notes a great portion of the speech which he has just delivered. The Resolution, so ably moved by the hon. Member for Accrington, sums up tersely and comprehensively what is the main principle underlying the whole of this fiscal controversy, and also underlying the attitude which we should take up as a nation with respect to the Colonial Conference. I am not going over the ground which has already been so ably covered with reference to the taxation of food, the injury that that taxation would do to the people of this country, or the relationships between ourselves and our Colonies; but I would say that the injustice and unfairness towards our Colonies of which the hon. Member for Cumberland has spoken would have been shown by this country if we had allowed their representatives to come here in ignorance of the real determination of the people of Great Britain. If it be the case—and I have heard no dispute even from the other side of the House as to what the result of the next election will be—that the people of this country are determined that they will not, for reasons which appear satisfactory to themselves, submit to the imposition of a tax on wheat, flour, meat, and dairy produce, for any purpose whatever, I think it is straightforward and honest to tell the Colonies the truth. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham did not shrink from telling the last Colonial Conference that. He told them in the plainest English that the people of this country would not stand the proposals then made with reference to imposing taxation on the food of the people. But to-night we find ourselves in this difficulty, that there is one body alone in this country which there is an attempt to prevent from giving its decision as to what the feeling of the country really is and that body is the House of Commons. Whether the decision of the House of Commons is right or wrong, those who believe that they have the majority in the House dare not face the test of the division lobby on the question. That indicates, at all events, that the time has come when the tribunal which will have to settle the question should be consulted, and that if the House of Commons is incapable of expressing an opinion on the subject the time has arrived when the constituencies should be asked, and asked before the conference is held, what their opinion is and their intentions are.

I do not shrink from the importance and gravity of the great issues which the Resolution raises; but I venture to say to the House that there is an even greater issue at stake at the present moment with reference to the Motion now before the House and the procedure which has been adopted by the Government both before and up to this night. This issue has not been raised by the Colonial Governments or by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; it has been raised by the Government alone and by the Prime Minister of this country. What we are face to face with is an unprecedented attack upon the rights, the privileges, the prerogatives, and the freedom ot the House of Commons. Who has endowed the present Government, or any Government in this country, with the right to prescribe limits to the discussions of the House of Commons? Who has given them the authority to say that if they absent themselves from the House, if they decline to take any part in the matter on which the House is proceeding, that discussion is of no value, and ceases to be a discussion in, and a decision of, the House of Commons? I am under the impression that with Mr. Speaker in the Chair, with the mace on the Table, and with a quorum of Members, here is the House of Commons. The constitution of the House is complete when those conditions are complied with. The presence or the absence of the Prime Minister, or of any one of his followers, or of all his followers put together, in no way affects the powers and privileges of a duly constituted House of Commons, and the test of the opinions of the House is to be found in one place, and one place alone, the division lobby. Of course there have been snap divisions—nobody denies it—taken at certain moments and under certain conditions which did not, perhaps, accurately represent the opinion and the judgment of the House; but there is a constitutional way of rescinding or reversing those decisions.

The Prime Minister told us, on the last occasion on which he condescended to take any part in these discussions, of the precedent set, he said, by Mr. Gladstone, and he instanced a division which took place when Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister on a question affecting the government of India. He said that that division was set aside by Mr. Gladstone, that no notice was taken of it, and that it was practically reversed on the *fiat* of the Minister in charge of the Department. Well, there is just a smattering of accuracy in the allegation; but it does not tell the whole truth. An important Resolution was introduced on a Friday evening; the Government resisted the proposal, which reversed to a great extent the principle of our past government of India, but were defeated in a House of 160 Members by a majority of eight votes. The charge was that Mr. Gladstone did not take any notice of that. That is not the case. It was a decision of the House of Commons, even under those abnormal circumstances, and the Government sent it out to India, submitted it to the Government of India and to trustworthy authorities, and months elapsed before the question was finally brought before the Cabinet, and when it was brought before them the Cabinet decided that it was impossible in the interests of the State to allow the Resolution to be carried out. The supporters of the Resolution were given an opportunity of reaffirming that Resolution, but they did not avail themselves of it. Will anybody say that that Resolution was disregarded or treated with contempt? And now the House is told that the justification for the action of the Government is that this is an academic question.

There is a singular phrase in the notice given of an Amendment by an hon. Member who has not had the courage to come and move it; it says—

> "The occupation of the time of the House by the discussion of abstract Resolutions of a prophetic nature and upon hypothetical bases, the majority of the House testifying their disapproval by being absent."

Well, the only way to testify disapproval is to vote against the Resolution, but that is the one way the Government dare not face. They say that it is an academic question. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham, when he raised the question, and those who follow him did not so consider it; the right hon. Gentleman, I think conscientiously, considered it a vital question, upon the proper solution of which depended the unity of the Empire, the existence of our trade, and our national prosperity. On the other side those who differed from him with equal conscientiousness and determination, believed that the policy suggested would be fatal to the prosperity of the Empire, the existence of its trade, and the maintenance of the proud position it had hitherto occupied. Is that an academic question for a great nation like this. The Government has been broken up by it, the Cabinet has been reconstructed; its ablest and most experienced statesmen went out on the question; and from the hour when the matter was raised to the present time there has not been a single by-election in the country in which this academic question has not been the principal—I might almost say the sole—issue upon which electors have voted. This is perhaps the keenest political fight which has taken place in this country since the Reform Bill; and the decisions of the House on a question of such magnitude are not a game, are not a joke, are not a performance depending entirely on the skill of the players. We have been told to "think Imperially." I suggest that we should think Imperially of the House of Commons, the oldest and noblest of representative Assemblies, at once the foundation and the bulwark of constitutional Government and free institutions.

What is the position of the House at this moment? Where is the Leader of the House? Next to you, Sir, the Leader is the guardian of the rights and privileges of the House of Commons; he has as clear and distinct a duty to the whole House as to his own Party. The great men who have held that position in the past have been able to maintain their position as Leader of the House as well as leader of a Party without the two duties clashing. But the present Leader has abdicated, gone away, and on a great constitutional question such as this, for the last two years, and especially during the present session, we have been met by what I may call the tactics of the nursery. The Prime Minister has been answered by a distinct Resolution of the House condemning his attitude on one of the principal questions of the day. Conceive such a Motion, condemning the Government, condemning the Prime Minister, and dealing with one of the greatest questions of the day, dealing with a great Imperial policy being brought forward in the days of Peel, of Russell, of Beaconsfield, of Gladstone. Would they have run away? No; they never treated the House with contempt. They were, each one in his turn, defeated during the course of their Premiership, and they took their defeat like men, like Englishmen. The present Government dare not face this House. And why? For the very reason that they dare not face the country. They are perfectly well aware what the decision of the country would be and they are not sure what the decision of the House would be. The evasions, the tactics of the last two years have been for the purpose of preventing the House giving or getting a plain answer to a plain question, and at this moment the House and the country are as ignorant of the policy of the Prime Minister in reference to fiscal question as they are of the policy of the Government in regard to the Army. Those are two great puzzles with which we are very much perplexed. I believe that outside the House of Commons and outside the Metropolis the people of this country feel very strongly not only upon this question of fiscal reform, but also upon the mode in which the House of Commons is being treated. It is said that there is a feeling in the country that the House of Commons is not maintaining its influence. That may be so, but that is what has always been said in one generation as contrasted with the generation that lived before it. But I am perfectly certain that the people of this country are proud of the House of Commons, and will neither forget nor forgive any treason to Parliamentary Government.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) said he was not dissatisfied with the effect that these debates in the House of Commons were having on the country on the question of tariff reform. He thought these debates were having a most powerful effect upon the country.

He did not believe that there was any corner of the country in which it was not perfectly well understood that, if tariff reform was not defended upon the floor of the House, it was because of the incapacity of tariff reformers for discussion and because their weakness would be revealed if they went into the division lobby. He was certain that when it became more thoroughly understood that tariff reform could not be defended in Parliament, the country generally would listen without conviction to the elaborate speeches and the numerous leaflets that were issued by the Tariff Reform League, and they would return to the old position, when tariff reform would be an academic question—if, indeed, there was any academy so illiterate as to defend it. It was hard that free-traders should be blamed for what was called abstract discussion. They did not begin it, and in fact they had been dragged into the discussion. And yet tariff reformers were not prepared to maintain their case within those walls, because there they could not speak without being answered.

He wished to deal with what appeared to him to be of real and material importance in the discussion on the question of colonial preference. He had always felt that colonial preference was the nobler part of the propaganda of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. A good many people shared with him a feeling of approval when they first read the original speech—which in his opinion was the most attractive speech the right hon. Gentleman ever made—on this subject on the 15th of May, 1903. He regretted that it had not been possible to discuss that question, apart from the general protectionist controversy, for a longer period, because it had been put forward with real sincerity and presented some interesting features. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had very ungraciously stolen from the Manchester school one of the least sound of their beliefs. They believed with great fervour in the unifying effect of trade. He thought a study of history would go to show that trade ranked very low down among the unifying influences which created bodies of opinion and great nationalities. The history of modern German nationality might be said to begin in the struggle against Napoleon. There was a great uprising of national feeling, which displayed itself in a great national struggle. Then there came a desire to exhibit it in a Customs union, and so to show that there was a bond of union in existence. The Zollverein was not the cause of German unity; it was one of the expressions of it. The same thing might be said of Hungary. When the dual Monarchy was organised there was a Customs union made as an expression of the common unity of the two kingdoms; and now Hungary, insisting on its own national spirit, was anxious to break that Customs union, not in order to make a nationality, because that was too visibly in existence already, but in order to express the nationality that was already in existence. So that in every case they saw that even a Zollverein did not bind a country together, but merely expressed that which already existed. It was a symptom and not a cause.

Here in the present case they had not to deal with anything so complete as free trade within the Empire. If there were a proposal really before them to create free trade within the Empire it would certainly be a proposal which would deserve very respectful consideration. But a very different proposal was before them. It was a proposal to have reciprocal preferences. Reciprocal preferences had this in common with all protective proposals, that they were capricious and partial, that they selected certain classes for benefit and certain other classes for injury. They were a sort of national favouritism by which tips were doled out in certain directions and were withheld in others. But that was not the worst of the case. The worst of the present proposals was that preference was put forward on a protective basis as part of a general protectionist argument, and the absurdity in which that landed them was not, he thought, sufficiently appreciated. They were to say to Canada, "You are to give us better terms for our manufacturing imports. In exchange for that we will give you an advantage on your corn exports." And, at the very time they were saying this, they were to explain to all the world that German and foreign imports were an injury to them, pressed down the wages of the working men, drove people out of employment, and were, indeed, a great mischief to the people of the country. It was as though the mother of a family, presiding at the board, said to her children, "This dish is dangerous; it is even poisonous, I propose to give you, therefore, a double dose of it in the hope that the consequent dyspepsia and other ailments that it may cause will arouse in you a sincere feeling of filial regard."

It was to be observed that in these negotiations with Canada we were proposing to gain from her more advantageous terms for our manufactures in a manner which would reverse the policy which Canada had pursued. Her idea, no doubt pursued, as they who were free-traders thought, in an unsound manner, was that she was no longer to be a country with a single industry, the great agricultural industry, but, on the contrary, a country with a great many industries. What we were asking her was to give an immense advantage, from our point of view, to her agricultural industry, and at the same time to expose to a special degree of competition her manufacturing industries. Therefore, the proposal was a reversal of Canadian policy for their own industrial good to a greater extent than was sometimes appreciated. It was obvious that if she reduced her duties there would be an increased opportunity for English competition; but it was not always reflected that, if we were to succeed in diverting the corn trade which now went on with foreign countries, and concentrated it on Canada, we should also divert the corresponding export trade from this country with which we paid for the corn. He could not help suspecting that that aspect might have been overlooked by Canadian manufacturers. He should doubt whether they were always better able to understand and follow out the laws of international exchange than very distinguished persons were in this country. Supposing this were so, we should be exposed to this danger: English manufactures would compete in the Canadian market even to a greater extent than had been anticipated, and then Canadian opinion would begin to assert itself, as it had already begun, to some extent, against that competition. The country would remain protectionist, but it would be intensified in its protectionist convictions by having made a convert of the mother country. Was it not certain, then, that the mother country, appearing to a protectionist country in the light of a competitor, would become not dearer, but less dear, not so much an object of loyalty as of jealousy, and that there would be a very real tendency to break the understanding already arrived at and to substitute, not closer union, but all the bitterness that came from having attempted to draw nearer and failed, and ending in mutual repulsion? He believed, therefore, that we should not gain Imperial unity in that direction. We should not gain Imperial unity by dressing up the Colonies in the character of Scarcity and dressing up the mother country in the character of Competition. We should not make them so dear to one another as they were in their natural shapes and without this masquerade. He hoped, therefore, we should not adopt a preferential policy.

At the same time he was very anxious that they who were free-traders, and who would have to settle this controversy, should not forget, in their desire to maintain free trade, that Imperial unity, the desire to draw closer to the Colonies, which was no doubt largely at the bottom of the Member for Birmingham's first development of this policy, was in itself a good thing and one which ought to command their sympathy and co-operation. He had never felt, apart from the fiscal question, that the prospect of Imperial unity was other than a cheerful one. The Empire had already engaged in great enterprises, like the South African War, in co-operation with the Colonies. Why should we not follow the lines of that development by increasing the opportunities of consultation on foreign affairs by co-operating in the government of the dependencies belonging to the whole of the Empire? Why should we not realise better than the Member for Birmingham was able to do that idea which he most lucidly and admirably laid down, namely, the idea of making the

Colonies feel that the Empire was not only ours but theirs? That, after all, was the desire and the object, very well stated, but foolishly pursued, which they all set before them. He hoped that the right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who must necessarily play a great part in the future, would not allow to slide out of their minds the obligation that lay on patriots of all sorts of political belief to maintain the honour of the Empire, to draw it, if possible, into a closer union. Let them not allow the Member for Birmingham, with whatever good intentions on his part, to become the patentee of Imperialism. It ought to be the common heritage of the whole country. And if, as he believed was the case, the colonists drew the inference from these debates that the House had drawn and that tariff reform had failed, let them at the same time draw the inference that they had many and powerful friends among the free-traders who had triumphed, and that, whether by free trade or protection, the interests of every colony in the British Empire were not less dear to us than were the interests of the counties in our own kingdom.

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said it was a great pleasure to find himself in agreement with the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich upon this question, because he knew that a few days hence they would be fighting each other tooth and nail upon another subject. He had no particular wish to speak on this subject at any length, because he had not heard any arguments which required contravening, and it was difficult to make a speech when they had no arguments to meet. He had never looked upon this movement as a serious one. When the late Colonial Secretary returned from South Africa and discovered that the Government had lost its popularity partly on account of the Education Act, and largely on account of the disastrous results of the war, he was anxious to change the subject, and he produced these fiscal proposals in order to give the country something else to talk about. He ventured to think that this new movement would share the same fate as other proposals which had arisen from the same source. The hon. Member for Cumberland had said that he would never have supported this new movement if he thought it would increase the price of the food of the working man. Where did the British farmer come in under these new fiscal proposals? The farmers in the eastern counties had declared that they did not want a tax upon corn, and sixty years ago they asked to be delivered from that tax. He could not help thinking that farmers were right in their contention that no good would come to them from protection unless they were also protected from competition from the Colonies. He could not help drawing attention to the farce which was being played night after night in this House by the empty benches opposite. The dignity of the House was gradually passing away, and the privileges of its Members were steadily disappearing, and so were the privileges of the people who sent them to represent them in the House of Commons. They saw the old-fashioned independent influential Member who cared nothing for office or title or entrance to society gradually passing away. He did not believe that there would be a general election before the autumn of 1907, and he should not be surprised if, when the last year of their present term of office came round, the Government brought in a Bill to discontinue elections altogether in order to remain in office.

Mr. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said the hon. Member who had seconded this Motion forgot to say that for the five years which preceded preference our exports to Canada went down, and from the moment they granted a preference to this country our exports to Canada went up. He was sorry that the Resolution had been moved, because if it were carried it would do away with all chance, so far as the Liberal Party were concerned, of this country ever entering into a preferential treaty of commerce with her Colonies. Mr. Cobden made a commercial treaty with France, and why should they not be allowed to make a similar treaty with the Colonies? It could not be denied that foreign nations did all they could to injure our trade. Their Colonies had helped them in war, and now they wanted them to help in commerce. The chairman of a big company in his constituency had pointed out to him the enormous advantage which his company had derived from Canadian preference, and he said that had it not been for this preference the work his company had done for Canada would have gone to America. If they refused to join with their Colonies in commercial treaties, of course the result would be that their Colonies would join with other countries, and this country would be shut out from colonial markets just as she was now shut out from the markets of foreign countries. As far as the food of the people was concerned the working classes would not be any worse off than they were now, and if he thought for one moment that they would have to pay more for their food under the new fiscal proposals he would have nothing to do with them. They had the authority of Mr. Charles Booth, who was recognised as a great authority upon the London poor, who wrote to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stating that, in his opinion, as far as he could see, the food of the people would not cost them any more under the scheme of the late Colonial Secretary than at the present time. There had been a great deal of fuss about the big loaf and the little loaf, but he would like to ask if hon. Members opposite had ever reckoned up how much a tax of 2s. a quarter upon foreign wheat would put upon the price of bread? If the whole of this tax was paid by the bakers it would only amount to two-thirds of a farthing upon a four pound loaf. The present system was driving capital out of this country, with the inevitable result that there was not near so much employment for the people. If they had more capital invested in industries in this country they would have more employment for their own people, and then they would have a state of things under which three employers would be running after one man instead of one man running after three employers. Hon. Members opposite tried to stop the Agricultural Rating Act from passing. The real fact of the matter was that hon. Members opposite were dreadfully afraid that the landlords would get the benefit of it. Their policy seemed to be purely negative. What he and his friends wanted was to get the people back to the land. That could not be done in any way except that which he had indicated. Give the landlords a fair percentage on the outlay for new buildings and they would put up cottages instead of allowing that work to be done by the county council or the parish council.

Mr. Hunt.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House disapproves on principle of the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce as being especially burdensome to the poor and injurious to the welfare of the nation; and believes that no proportionate remission from existing duties on tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa would afford compensation for the imposition of such taxes; and declares its opinion that any Colonial Conference that is entered upon, except on the understanding that this country will not agree to the taxation of corn, meat, and dairy produce, will result in failure."—(*Sir Joseph Leese.*)

STANDING COMMITTEE PROCEDURE (ACTION OF CHAIRMAN).

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) called attention to the conduct of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division when acting as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Trade on March 21st. He said he had no intention to cast any aspersion on the hon. Member. He thought he would have the support of the hon. Gentleman himself in the course he was taking, for he found that in November, 1902, he gave notice of a Motion to the effect that the terms of the Standing Order in regard to closure of debate in the House itself should be altered. There were certain rules which had been laid down for the guidance of Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Commons, and they gave power to Mr. Speaker or the Chairmen of Committees to apply the closure, but no such rule had ever been laid down for the guidance of the Chairmen of Standing Committees. On March 23rd, 1893, the hon. Member for the Oswestry Division of Shropshire complained of the action of the Chairman of a Committee in closuring a debate, and the Chairman justified his action on the ground that the question had already been sufficiently discussed. Of course they all recognised that there must be a considerable amount of discretion left to the Chairman of a Committee, but in this particular case what happened was that a Motion had only been under discussion for about twenty minutes. He did not think any question of fact would arise upon that. An Amendment was moved, and afterwards withdrawn at the request of the Committee.

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Leave to withdraw it was refused, and it was negatived.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY said everybody thought it was advisable not to discuss it in Committee. The real object his hon. friend had in moving it was to get at the facts. That was a very different state of affairs from what took place in March, 1893. He did not think anybody would say that it was impossible to carry on the discussion in the Committee if the discussion had been allowed to continue. But the hon. Gentleman refused to put a Motion for the adjournment which he (the speaker) moved at that time. The hon. Member for Renfrewshire moved the Motion which was before the Committee on that occasion, and he stated that he would accept the Motion for the adjournment if the Government would do certain things. The right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture was not in his place, and it was for that reason that he moved the adjournment of the discussion in order that the right hon. Gentleman might have time to consider the proposal which had been made. It was about ten minutes to two, the Chairman refused to put the Motion for the adjournment of discussion, and when he (the speaker) rose to continue the debate he put the Question. There was a Standing Order of the House which said that Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees should have power not to accept a dilatory Motion, but no similar power was given to the Chairmen of the Standing Committees. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the custom was now to send contentious Bills to the Standing Committees, and it was therefore in the interest of minorities that certain rules should be laid down for the guidance of Chairmen. Everybody would agree that it would be well that both the Chairmen and the members of those Committees should know exactly what powers they had. Therefore, without casting any aspersion on the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division he had thought it right to bring the question before the House in the hope that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wigan would be accepted and that a special Committee would be appointed to report whether any amendments in the procedure of the Standing Committees were desirable.

Mr. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S. W.), in seconding the Motion, said he concurred with his hon. friend in stating that they had no desire to cast any aspersion on the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division, and he hoped the hon. Member would accept that assurance in the spirit in which it was given. Everybody who had attended the Grand Committees must have been struck with the fact that there was an entire absence of Standing Orders for regulating the debates in those Committees. When the Committees were set up they were intended to deal with Bills of a non-contentious character, and so long as that rule was observed there was perhaps no great necessity for Standing Orders. But that salutory rule laid down by Mr. Gladstone had been broken, not perhaps by one side more than another. [An Hon. Member: Oh!] That was his view. At all events, it was not denied that it had been broken, and indeed now it was impossible for a private Member to have a chance of getting a Bill through, however non-contentious it might be, unless it was referred to a Grand Committee. The practice which had grown up in regard to the closure was much more drastic than the one that was allowed in the House. He thought it was the Leader of the Opposition who gave the first precedent with respect to closure in a Standing Committee, and it had placed absolutely in the hands of the Chairman the right to closure a debate whenever he thought fit, and nobody had any right to say a word. He did not think that was a desirable state of affairs. He held that the Committee should have the right to say whether the debate should be terminated and the Question put. The same remark applied to the question of adjournment. In this particular case he thought a very great public service would have been rendered if the Committee had adjourned. Although the Motion for the adjournment was refused they were able to make a compromise at a subsequent sitting of the Committee, but that compromise was rendered infinitely more difficult than it would have been if the Motion for the adjournment had been put. With regard to the question of voting, he remembered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Yarmouth refused to vote because he had not heard the question sufficiently debated to enable him to come to a conclusion. The procedure to be followed in such a case was laid down in Erskine May's well-known book, and he held that the action of the Chairman on the occasion referred to in refusing to make the right hon. Gentleman vote was entirely without precedent and contrary to the usages of Grand Committees. It was easy for the Chairman of a Committee to fall into an error of this kind when he had no Standing Orders upon which he could act. He hoped, therefore, that something would be done to have this matter settled in order that the work of the Grand Committees might be properly carried out.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, doubts having arisen as to certain rulings given by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Trade on 21st March, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient that rules should be laid down for the guidance of Chairmen of Standing Committees."—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS: I am sure those who listened to the hon. Gentlemen will appreciate the statement that I rise under some difficulty. I have no intention of complaining for a moment of anything that has fallen from the hon. Gentlemen. They have repeated to-night what they said in Committee, that their action is not personal. I wish they had allowed me a few more moments to reply. I shall endeavour to put the case as clearly as I can to the House. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion has taken up, quite unnecessarily, the defence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Yarmouth, who is not here to state his case, and who explained to the satisfaction of those in the Committee why he did not vote. He then said he took that course under circumstances other than those which had been detailed by the hon. Gentleman, who has given a somewhat inaccurate account of the proceedings in question. The hon. Gentleman should have allowed the right hon. Gentleman to come to his place and raise the question himself. The Motion before the House raises two separate things. It deals with the personal conduct of a Chairman of the Committee and it goes on to deal with a matter with which I have great sympathy, namely, the working of the Grand Committees. On the first, with which I am personally concerned, I shall in the briefest possible manner lay the facts before those who do me the honour to listen to me.

There were two Amendments before the Committee—what I may call a major and a minor Amendment. There was an Amendment which covered a large field and which was debated in the most excellent manner. It was argued in a business-like manner, and the discussion might be regarded as affording an illustration of how business before a Grand Committee should be conducted. It was debated for over an hour and when the Grand Committee came to a decision on that it was half-past one. Then the minor Amendment was started by an hon. Member. When he came to me and

Mr. Galloway.

asked the precise place at which it could be inserted, I saw there was doubt as to whether the Committee had not already decided the point which the minor Amendment raised. But I let it in. Immediately I put it from the Chair, the hon. Member who initiated our earlier proceedings this evening raised the point whether the Committee had not really already decided the matter, whether it was not covered by the decision come to. I was inclined to think in my inmost heart that it was, but I let it in. I said I had grave doubts, but, at all events, I thought it entitled me as Chairman to suggest that a decision might be come to on this very minor Amendment with some rapidity especially as it was understood that we were going to commence the consideration of another larger and quite different matter when we began our proceedings the next day. The hon. Member for Peckham rose and made what I ventured to say at the time was a speech not dealing with the minor Amendment, but one roaming at large and raising the whole principle of the Bill. The hon. Member, roaming at large, made a Second Reading speech. I appealed to him, and he gave way and concluded his remarks. I was proceeding to put the Question when the hon. Member again rose and moved the adjournment of the Committee. I refused the Motion, acting strictly on precedent, and went further. Under the circumstances, basing myself on precedent, and accepting the full responsibility of my action, I proceeded to put the Question. I put the Question and the Committee came to a decision. That is the head and front of my offending. That was at ten minutes to two o'clock, and we were on the eve of adjourning. I have sat for more than fifteen years on these Grand Committees—for the first five years as a member and during the last ten years as Chairman. I recollect in the earlier years I had the high honour of sitting under the present Leader of the Opposition who, as Chairman of a Grand Committee, was one of the most excellent I ever saw. I saw him bring the proceedings to an end in a more drastic manner than I ever did. I based myself on that and other precedents and I am bound to say that, if I were in the Chair to-morrow and the same circumstances were to arise at ten minutes to two o'clock, and I had the knowledge that next day we were to proceed to a much more important matter, and a Member rose in the way the hon. Member did, I should act in precisely the same way. I acknowledge it is a strong proceeding to take. During the whole ten years I have acted as Chairman of Grand Committees I have never resorted to it before. But in the circumstances I am satisfied that, acting to the best of my ability and with a desire to maintain the efficiency of these Committees, I did what was right for the proceedings of the Committee. That is all I have to say on the personal matter.

The hon. Members who moved and seconded the Motion devoted a great deal of their remarks to the consideration of the working of the Grand Committees. I am one of those who have always defended the appointment of Grand Committees. I have always thought that they were a most valuable part of the machinery of this House. I think that we shall have to make great use of the Grand Committees, and I entirely agree with the hon. Member who has put down an Amendment that it is desirable to take some opportunity of considering the whole working of these Committees with the view to improving their machinery and laying down something like Standing Orders in order to guide both members and Chairmen. In saying that I must carefully guard myself by saying that there can be no doubt whatever as to that firm ground on which as Chairman on that occasion I took action, using the classical language which we all know in this House. I humbly submit myself to the judgment of the House.

***Sir FRANCIS POWELL** (Wigan) moved as an Amendment to add at the end of the Resolution the words, "and that a Select Committee be appointed to consider the procedure of Standing Committees, and to report whether any and what amendments in such procedure are desirable."

Sir CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words 'and that a Select Committee be appointed to consider the procedure of Standing Committees, and to report whether any and what amendments in such procedure are desirable.'"—(*Sir Francis Powell.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and negatived.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Mr. John Ellis.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE FROM DEBATES.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury, who, so far as he could see, was the only member of the Government who really discharged his duties faithfully, whether, inasmuch as the Prime Minister did not read the newspapers or read the proceedings of the House, which he presumed to lead, he would call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that a Motion had been carried to-night which practically reversed the opinion in regard to the Colonial Conference expressed by the Prime Minister two or three weeks ago. In the course of the discussion then the Prime Minister stated that he thought the conference ought to be free and unfettered.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked how far this procedure was to be carried. Could the right hon. Gentleman announce on behalf of the Prime Minister whether it would go on to-morrow and to-morrow week, and every Tuesday and Wednesday when private Members' Motions were brought before the House? If no attention was to be paid by the Prime Minister to the decisions the House came to, he thought the matter was becoming serious.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said the Prime Minister was not treating the House with the respect which was due to it. He did not think he would be acting properly himself if he were to refrain from saying in this House what he had already said in the public prints. He accused the Prime Minister of gross personal disrespect and of malfeasance in his duty to the Sovereign. It was the old constitutional custom for the Prime Minister or his agent to write an autograph letter to the Sovereign every day, giving a full account of the proceedings in Parliament. This was the assertion of the Sovereign's right to be informed of all that went on in the House of Commons. The Ministry were the servants of the House as well as of the King. The old theory was that the King was present in Parliament, and that when he was not present himself he was represented by his accredited Ministers. The Ministers of the Crown were not present at the debate to-night, and they had absented themselves in the same way on other occasions lately. By that conduct they were not only insulting the House, but acting in an unfaithful and disrespectful manner to the Sovereign. They ought to know that the Sovereign in a supreme moment could dissolve this Parliament and trust to the people. Mr. Gladstone adhered to the practice of writing a daily letter to Queen Victoria, giving an account of the proceedings of the House; Mr. W. H. Smith when Leader of the House also pursued the practice. Mr. Gladstone observed this practice to the last, and when infirmity made him unable to attend the evening sittings of the House his letter to the Queen was finished by Sir William Harcourt. It was no secret that the great biography of Mr. Gladstone by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs was largely based on the letters which were written to Queen Victoria. It was a practice which had been followed since the time of Grenville. Why had the present Prime Minister neglected this constitutional usage? This was not merely a House to register the decrees of the Government. A measure proposed by a private Member had an equal right to be considered, and the distinction drawn by the Prime Minister between Government Bills and private Members' Bills was a fallacious distinction. The Prime Minister had run away. He had heard of a runaway horse and a runaway wife; but never before had he met with a runaway Prime Minister. He had known something of many Cabinets, but he had never known one so like Noah's Ark as the present Cabinet. It was full of interesting relatives. Noah's Ark was floated on a waste of water, the present Cabinet was floated on a waste of blood.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) asked when it was proposed to take the Committee stage of the Army Annual Bill. If it was put down for Thursday would the Government be sure to proceed with it, so that hon. Members would not be brought down to the House to discuss it and then find that it had been put off?

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington) said that this was the first time he had heard complaint made of the postponement of the Committee stage of a Government Bill. As to how long this sort of thing was to go on, that depended very much on hon. Members opposite. They had enjoyed great success in the ballot, and if they used their success to put down fiscal Motions the Government would continue to do in the future what they had done in the past. He had been asked to inform the Prime

Minister of the Resolution that had been passed. He always reported to the Prime Minister what passed in the House either next morning or even on the same night. [An HON. MEMBER: He said you did not report the other day.] He did not communicate the exact terms of the Resolution, but he told the Prime Minister that the House had spent a most interesting and instructive evening. As to what the effect of these Resolutions would be, the Resolutions in favour of Home Rule and Welsh disestablishment passed by a former Parliament were not noticed by its successor, and he did not see why the Parliament which was to meet some years hence should take any notice of the Resolutions passed by this Parliament.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he wished to point out the grave charge which the right hon. Gentleman had made against the veracity of the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the statement made in the House the other day by the Prime Minister that he was not aware of what had taken place in the House the previous evening was totally inaccurate.

***SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD**: The right hon. Gentleman was not told the terms of the Resolution.

MR. DALZIEL said he was sure the Patronage Secretary had no disposition to quibble over a detail. He accepted what the right hon. Gentleman said as to the Prime Minister not knowing the terms of the Resolution. Were they to understand that the right hon. Gentleman in reporting to the Prime Minister in the morning what had occurred on the previous night, did not state that an important Motion had been carried in regard to the fiscal question?

***SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD**: The words I used were "an interesting and instructive evening."

MR. DALZIEL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman conveyed the information that the debate dealt with fiscal matters. That was his point. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had now given them an insight into the way in which the business of the House was being conducted. He reported to the Prime Minister what had taken place, and the Prime Minister came down to the House and stated that he did not know what had taken place. He hoped the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury would in future go a little more into detail in reporting to the Prime Minister what had occurred in the House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said that there was a strange discrepancy between the statement of the right hon. Gentleman and that of the Prime Minister. Surely the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to say that he did not tell the Prime Minister the subject that was discussed when the House spent an interesting and instructive evening. The position was this. Having got information as to what occurred from the principal Government Whip, the Prime Minister, when asked a Question on the subject, professed to be entirely ignorant of what had taken place in the House. That was an unworthy position for the Prime Minister, it was a gross insult to the House, and it was a most unconstitutional proceeding.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 5th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Birmingham Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill; Hitchin and District Gas Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill. As amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords]; Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords]; Malvern Water Bill. To be read a second time To-morrow.

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill (by Order); Epping Gas Bill (by Order); Great Eastern Railway Bill (by Order); Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill (by Order); Loughborough Corporation Bill (by Order); Norwich Union Life Insurance Society (by Order); Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill (by Order). Third Reading deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting).

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till To-morrow (Evening Sitting).

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Colne Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from West Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Bathgate; and Catrine; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Chipping Ongar; Cuckfield; Durham (two); Gamlingay; Highlands; Newcastle-on-Tyne; Richmond (two); and Woodham; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896 (GRANTS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return [presented April 4th] to be printed. [No. 111.]

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered March 2nd; *Mr. David Alfred Thomas*]: to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

VACCINATION EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address March 27th; *Mr. Weir*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Middlesex rearranging the Polling Districts in the Uxbridge Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 (ORDERS).

Copy presented, of an Order in Council, dated April 1st, 1905, adding Wicklow to the ports at which Explosives may be landed [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT.

Abstract Account presented, of Receipts and Payments of the Treasury

Solicitor, in the year ended December 31st, 1904, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial Intestacies, etc.), in which accounts were opened in the books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3334 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sale of Obsolete War Vessels at Chatham—Names and Prices.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what are the names of the obsolete vessels offered for sale by auction at Chatham this day; which of them have been sold; and what was the price realised in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The names of the vessels offered for sale at Chatham, all of which were sold, and the prices realised, are as follows:—

Name.	Description.	Price realised.
		£
Simoom - - -	3rd Class Battleship	14,550
Warspite - - -	1st Class Cruiser (Armoured)	18,150
Northampton - -	do. do.	15,800
Arethusa - - -	2nd Class Cruiser	7,600
Galatea - - -	1st Class Cruiser	11,150
Australia - - -	do.	10,950
Severn - - -	2nd Class Cruiser	7,100
Mersey - - -	do.	7,200
Archer - - -	3rd Class Cruiser	4,850
Cossack - - -	do.	4,800
Mohawk - - -	do.	4,850
Racoon - - -	do.	4,150
Barracouta - -	do.	5,000
Exmouth - - -	Training Ship	4,100
Renard - - -	1st Class Torpedo Gunboat	2,900
Gleaner - - -	do.	2,600
Pigmy - - -	1st Class Gunboat	2,000
Redwing - - -	Coastguard Boat	1,250
Starling - - -	2nd Class Gunboat	1,600
Bouncer - - -	3rd Class Gunboat	740
Royal Adelaide -	Hulk	3,500
Victoria - - -	Coastguard Sailing Cruiser	665
Beaver - - -	do.	465
Adder - - -	do.	365
Frances - - -	do.	365
Neptune - - -	do.	320
Margaret - - -	do.	345
Delight - - -	do	370
Squirrel - - -	Sailing Cutter	205
Mary - - -	do.	185

Discharge of Dockyard Employees at Portsmouth.

Mr. TANKERVILLE CHAMBERLAYNE (Southampton): To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether the proposed discharge of dockyard employees at Portsmouth can be deferred until the commencement of the summer, when it will be easier for unemployed men to obtain work than it is at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Lee.*) Although it would not be possible, in the interests of the service, to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion, the discharges will be carried out as gradually as possible, and every care has been taken to effect such reductions as are necessary with the least possible amount of hardship. It is hoped that the number of discharges will not at any time exceed twenty-five in a week at Portsmouth.

Maximum Wages of Provincial Sorting Clerks, Telegraphists and Postmen.

Mr. PRIESTLEY (Grantham): To ask the Postmaster-General if in the fixing of the maximum wages of sorting clerks and telegraphists regard has been had to the relative cost of living in the different towns; and, if so, why the maximum of this class in Lincoln, Boston, and Peterborough is 48s. and in Grantham, where the cost of living is higher than in those towns, the maximum is only 44s.; and why the Lincoln postmen are 2s. higher in their maximum than Grantham.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Hitherto the wages of sorting clerks and telegraphists in the provinces have been based solely on the volume of business transacted at the particular office, but the cost of living also will in future be taken into consideration. If the sorting clerks and telegraphists or the postmen at Grantham desire to make any representations to me respecting their pay I will consider whether any increase is warranted.

Maximum Salary of London Telegraphists.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the Civil Service Commissioners for a number of years immediately following the Fawcett revision of salaries in the telegraph service published notices offering the prospect of a salary of £190 to London telegraphists; and, if so, whether he will state the number of officials who entered the service under these terms of service, and the number of persons receiving this paper of the Civil Service Commissioners who are now in receipt of £190 per annum in London.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am fully aware of the circumstance to which the hon. Member refers, but I do not think that any useful purpose would be served by giving the information for which he asks. The prospect of rising to £190 a year by promotion to the senior class still exists, with the difference that the maximum has now been raised to £200 a year. Access to the class is obtained in the same manner as heretofore, namely, by promotion on the occurrence of vacancies.

Pay of Learners in Enniskillen Telegraph Department.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that learners in the telegraph department, Enniskillen, over the age of nineteen years, were paid 15s. to 18s. per week during last summer for substituting the staff on leave; that, while considering the question of improving the pay of this class, he has decided, as dating from 1st April, that alterations were to take place; and that, as a result of his changes, the learners have been offered 8s. 6d. and 10s. per week for the work previously recompensed by 15s. and 18s.; and, if so, whether he will explain the reason for this reduction.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware that there are cases of the kind to which the hon. Member refers, and I have already issued general instructions that learners already employed as substitutes may be given the option of retaining their present varying rates of pay as learners and as substitutes in lieu of the constant rates for learners with two years service and upwards indicated in my announcement of the 28th ultimo.

Sick Leave in the Post Office—Case of Mr. Bullamore.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a telegraphist named Bullamore submitted a certificate from a private doctor at Brixton, stating that he was suffering from post influenzal debility, and needed further rest; that the official medical adviser certified that Bullamore's health was as usual, and no rest was required; that subsequently a specialist certified that Bullamore's symptoms were genuine, and that he could only expect to get relief by prolonged rest and quiet, and that the medical department decline to act upon the advice of the specialist; and, if so, will he state the attitude that his Department adopts towards the certificates of private practitioners.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have received special reports respecting Mr. Bullamore's health from his private medical attendant and from a specialist, as well as from the Chief Medical Officer of the Post Office, and an aural surgeon whom that gentleman consulted. I have decided, at the suggestion of the Chief Medical Officer, to lay the whole matter before the Medical Referee to the Treasury. As regards certificates from private practitioners, full consideration is given to them, but I am bound to be guided by the opinion of the medical officers of the Department in such matters. In cases of doubt the Medical Referee is consulted.

Telegram handed in at Clones Rail Office.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has made his promised inquiry into the circumstances connected with the telegram handed in at Clones rail office on 4th of March; and, if so, will he state the result of his inquiry.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The reply is in the affirmative, and I have communicated the result to the hon. Member.

Tuberculosis—Loss Incurred by Butchers During 1904.

Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture can he give an approximate statement of the loss incurred by butchers in 1904 from tuberculosis; and will he favour the introduction of a Bill on the subject this session.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am not in possession of the information desired by the hon. Member, and, whilst recognising the importance of the subject to which the Question refers, I am afraid that I could not hold out any promise that the Government would introduce a Bill this session dealing with it.

Sale of Adulterated Foreign Butter—Inspection in England.

Mr. BRIGG: To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what foreign nations have inspectors in this country to detect adulteration of their butter; and how many inspectors are there belonging to each nation.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) So far as I am aware, no foreign nations have inspectors in this country to detect adulteration of their butter. Several countries, including Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, Germany, and the United States have appointed agricultural representatives here, but their duty is rather to find fresh markets for their country's produce, and to supply information as to the state of trade, than to detect adulteration.

Income-Tax Assessments.

Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what were the number of assessments upon which income-tax was collected in each of the years ending 31st March, 1903, 1904, and 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I am not prepared to go to the very large extra expense which would be entailed by the preparation of a Return showing the number of assessments collected by the 31st of March in the years mentioned, but the hon. Member will, I think, obtain sufficient information for any purpose he has in view from the Return promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the hon. Member for East Edinburgh.

Cultivation of Sugar Beet in Ireland.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a scheme has been outlined for the growth of sugar beet in the South of Ireland; and whether, seeing that foreign beet growers generally obtain 9 per cent. of saccharine matter and a tonnage of twelve per acre, whilst it has been proved that beet grown in county Cork showed 19 per cent. of saccharine and a tonnage of twenty per acre, in view of these circumstances he will recommend the Department of Agriculture to support the commencement of sugar beet growing in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department are aware that a scheme has been formulated for the growth of sugar beet and the manufacture of sugar in the South of Ireland. They are informed that the percentage of sugar in beet and the yield per acre on the Continent are much in excess of the figures quoted for foreign sugar beet in the Question. Roots with as much as twenty-four per cent of sugar have been grown on the Continent; and in some districts in Germany the whole crop will average seventeen to twenty per cent. of sugar. For the reasons given in answer to previous Questions on this subject, the Department are not prepared to recommend the growing of sugar beet in Ireland.

Irish Fisheries—Scarcity of Fish.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the complaints of the decline in the supply of fish around the Irish coast due to the destruction or disturbance of the young fish in the breeding waters, and also to the incursion of steam trawlers within the prescribed limits and to the absence of any close season; and, if so, whether he will have inquiries instituted into this question.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Complaints of the general decline of the supply of fish around the Irish coast have not been made, and would not, having regard to the quantities of fish landed, be justified. The question of trawling around the Irish coast has been most extensively dealt with, and at present there are about fifty by-laws in force restricting or prohibiting that mode of fishing in Irish bays and inshore waters. These by-laws are, on the whole, well observed. Breaches of their provisions have occasionally taken place, but since 1899 about fifty prosecutions have been instituted resulting, in most cases, in the infliction of substantial penalties. Although no actual close season has been fixed for any kind of sea fish, nevertheless certain regulations have in some instances been made which have the same effect as the establishment of a close time. If the decline of fish in any particular locality around the Irish coast be brought under the notice of the Department of Agriculture, an inquiry will be held if the circumstances are deemed to warrant it.

Identification of Frozen Meat Imported into Ireland.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received copies of resolutions from the Irish Cattle Traders and Stock Owners Association and the Dublin Victuallers Association asking him to introduce a Bill to identify frozen meat imported into Ireland; and whether he will confer with the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture respecting this measure.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) A communication, dated March 27th, on the subject of the marking of imported meat has been received from the Irish Cattle Traders and Stock Owners Association, but no recent communication appears to have been received from the Dublin Victuallers Association on the subject. No promise can be given as to the introduction this session of legislation of the kind suggested.

Evicted Tenants Reinstated in County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the names of the nineteen evicted tenants in county Kerry restored to their farms since the passage of the Land Act, 1903; the estates on which they are situated; and whether their restoration is due to the action of the landlord or of the Estates Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The appended list gives the information asked for. The evicted tenants were reinstated by the landlords.

Name of Evicted Tenant.	Estate of.
Patrick J. Cronin -	Edward Murphy.
Michael Dwyer -	John C. Hurley.
Mary Curran - -	C. W. Warden.
Michael Hussey -	,,
Jeremiah Sheehan -	,,
Patrick Neill - -	,,
Tobias Delahunty -	,,
Bridget Doyle - -	,,
Mary Cronin - -	,,
Patrick Mahony -	,,
Laurence O'Sullivan -	,,
Timothy Sullivan -	,,
Patrick Shea - -	,,
Michael Sullivan -	,,
Kate Sullivan - -	,,
Michael Sheehan -	,,
David Sheehan -	,,
Daniel Casey - -	D. C. Coltsman.
Denis Healy - -	McCartie.

Police Patrol Duty in Ireland.

MR. BRIGG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland under what circumstances is the rule relaxed in Ireland which allows for the patrol duty to be carried out singly and not in couples.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The one-man day patrol system was extended to the country generally in June, 1904. In a few localities, however, two-men day patrols have been allowed owing to unrest in the neighbourhood or for other special reasons, such as the preservation of order on fair and market-days or the detection of particular offences.

Steamship Subsidies to the West Indies.

MR. BRIGG: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies to what extent is the steamship subsidy of £40,000 per annum, which is given to the West Indies by England, applied for cheapening the cost of shipments of fruit to American ports.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) No subsidy is granted by this country to any steamer service between the West Indian Colonies and the United States ports.

Newry Training Ground—Transfer of 2nd West Yorks Regiment from Belfast.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state why the 2nd West Yorks battalion, stationed at Belfast, was divided and sent to Newry for field training; for what reason has the Black Mountain training, near Belfast, been abolished; and what is the cost of the training ground at Newry.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Ireland, reports that this regiment was ordered to Newry owing to the absence of sufficient barrack accommodation at Belfast and difficulty of obtaining suitable ground for company training within reasonable distance of Belfast; that the Black Mountain is not suitable and is strictly preserved; and that nothing is paid at Newry for the ground worked over.

Grievances of Pensioned Reserve Officers.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for War why it was that the Committee appointed by the late Secretary of State to inquire into the grievances of the pensioned officers of the Reserve did not, as promised by the late Lord Hardwicke in the House of Lords, 11th May, 1901, inquire into the whole subject, and did not take evidence from the Reserve of officers; and whether, in view of the fact that his predecessor admitted the existence of a grievance under which the pensioned officers of the Reserve are suffering, and that under the terms of the Royal Warrant in force in 1899 junior officers of the Reserve who had retired with gratuities were more highly recompensed for their mobilised services than their pensioned seniors, he will say what steps he proposes to take to redress the alleged grievance resulting from this difference of treatment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) There appears to be some misapprehension on the matter. The Committee in question was appointed to consider the terms on which retired officers are required to serve. This Committee had all necessary information before them, and reported that it would be quite impossible to make the proposals they recommended retrospective. In these circumstances it will be undertood that no further steps in the direction suggested in the Question are possible. I may also call the hon. Member's attention to a further statement by Lord Hardwicke on 7th August†, 1903, in which he corrected his previous statement and explained that the Committee found themselves unable "to recommend the idea of redressing the grievances of any particular officer."

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Training of Seamen.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the actual number of efficient seamen of twenty years of age obtained from each 1,000 lads entered at ordinary enrolling age; whether he can state the actual amount expended directly or indirectly on such 1,000 youths, including all expenditure on those who do not attain the age of twenty as able seamen, and can thus ascertain the total cost of each able seaman becoming fit for active service; and whether he has compared such cost with the expense incurred by the War Office in enrolling immature youths from civil life for the Army with the object of developing them into efficient soldiers.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The number of seamen of twenty years of age obtained from 1,000 entrants as boys is about 800. The total cost of a man to date of becoming A.B. is estimated at about £240. This figure includes cost of training, pay, victualling, and clothing, both for those who attain the rating of A.B. and those who do not. The Admiralty have no *data* which would enable any such comparison to be made as that suggested in the last part of the hon. Member's Question.

Newfoundland Fisheries—British Cruisers on the French Shore.

General LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any vessels of the Royal Navy are to be employed this season on the so-called French shore of Newfoundland; and, if so, whether they will be cruisers detached from the North American and West Indian Squadron, or whether they will be vessels specially commissioned for the purpose.

Mr. PRETYMAN: The reply to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. As regards the latter part of the Question, the vessels detailed for the duty referred to are not drawn from the North American and West Indian Squadron but are detached from other services.

Army Enlistment Statistics.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what number of men have been enlisted during each month from October to April in 1897–8 and 1902–3.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): The numbers, excluding Colonial enlistments, were as follows:—

	1897–8.	1902–3.
October - -	3,443	5,901
November - -	3,165	5,527
December - -	2,608	3,930
January - -	4,077	6,105
February - -	2,991	4,561
March - -	3,054	3,414
April - -	2,459	2,404

Highland Light Infantry.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, with a view to induce Highlanders to join the Highland Light Infantry, he will consider the practicability of grouping the regiment with other Highland regiments with headquarters at Perth.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Highland Light Infantry has been open for recruiting in all Scotland for more than three years, and therefore the suggested grouping with other Highland Regiments would not appear likely to affect the recruiting in any respect.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxvii., 380.

MR. WEIR: Is there not a difficulty in getting Highlanders to enlist?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am informed that a large number of Highlanders do join in the Lowlands.

MR. WEIR: A few days ago the right hon. Gentleman said the majority were Lowlanders!

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, of the recruits obtained in the Lowlands the great majority are Highlanders.

Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud); I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when he proposes to proceed with the enlargement of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not in a position at the present moment to say when it will be possible to proceed with the enlargement of the Royal Military College.

Sales of Infantry Regulation Boots.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will inform the House how many infantry regulation boots were sold, by tender or otherwise, after the close of the South African War; in what quantities the lots were offered; and the average price obtained.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): No infantry regulation boots have been sold from store by tender or otherwise since the close of the South African War. A certain number of boots, mostly part worn, whose owners could not be traced, were recovered in South Africa and sold.

Distress at Enfield.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the distress prevailing at Enfield through the postponement of the carrying out of the decision of the Army Council, he will consider the advisability, pending the decision of the Departmental Committee now sitting, of giving sufficient work to the Enfield factory to prevent any increase of distress.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Every effort will be made to prevent any increase of distress, but it is not possible to give work to Enfield beyond the money available for payment of wages. All the men are at present working short time, and the factory will continue to be closed on Saturday and Monday until the programme of manufacture for the year is definitely ascertained.

North Randfontein Mine—Coolie Disturbances.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state how many Chinese coolies were concerned in the riot which took place at the North Randfontein Mine on April 1st; what was the cause of the disturbance; what were the casualties among the coolies and among the police; how many coolies were arrested; and, if their trial has already taken place, what sentences have been inflicted.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have made inquiry but have not yet received a reply.

Transvaal Constitution.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when he expects that the new Constitution of the Transvaal will be promulgated; and whether, along with the Constitution, he will lay Papers and correspondence relating to its adjustment.

MR. LYTTELTON: I would refer the hon. Member to my reply of yesterday† to the hon. Member for Poplar. I propose to lay, at the same time as the Letters Patent, such Papers as can be suitably given.

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† See page 310.

War Material Factories in India.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will ascertain how many factories in India are at present engaged in the manufacture of war material, and the number of Europeans and natives respectively employed in these factories.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I informed the hon. Member on March 23rd† that there are at present eleven factories in India engaged in the manufacture of war material. I will inquire of the Government of India as to the number of Europeans and of natives employed in the factories.

Aliens in British and Irish Gaols.

Mr. FORDE RIDLEY (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of convicted prisoners of foreign birth who have been received in His Majesty's prisons in Great Britain and Ireland during the year 1904.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): The numbers are :—In England and Wales, 4,396; Scotland, 342; Ireland, 95; Total, 4,833.

In reply to Mr. Keir Hardie's Question as to proportion of aliens to prisoners of the native population, Mr. Akers-Douglas said :—The number of convicted prisoners increased by 22 per cent. between 1899 and 1903. But the number of aliens among them increased during that period by 68 per cent.

Committals to Industrial Schools—Parents' Liabilities.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many orders have been made by the London magistrates against parents whose children have been committed to industrial and truant schools during the last five years, and the amount of arrears still standing against such parents on the books of the department responsible for the collection of this money.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I regret that I am unable to give the figures for five years; but during the last three years the total number of orders made in the Metropolitan district against parents whose children have been committed to industrial and truant schools was 3,171. The amount of the parental contributions still outstanding in respect of these orders could not be given without a detailed examination of the books, which would involve very great labour. I can, however, give the total amount of parental contributions written off as irrecoverable during that period, which was £10,936: while the amount which was collected was £13,544. These two latter figures do not include the amounts collected and written off respectively by the London County Council in respect of cases at the Feltham Industrial School and at the three day industrial schools in London, viz., Drury Lane, Brunswick Road, and Penton Road.

Licensing Compensation Authorities' Procedure.

*Mr. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in the case of a licence which, after objection by a member of the public, is reported to the compensation authority by the renewal authority as not required, he has yet taken any steps to secure that the objecting member of the public shall be heard by the compensation authority before that body comes to any decision as to whether the licence in question shall or shall not be renewed; and, if not, whether he will consider the desirability of immediately taking such steps, seeing that the preliminary meetings of compensation authorities are in some counties already being held.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No, Sir. It appears to me that, under the procedure prescribed by the Licensing Rules, 1904, there is every opportunity for the proper consideration of the public requirements in the execution of the duty imposed on the compensation authority by the Act. I have nothing to add to my previous Answer.

*Mr. LEIF JONES said the whole point was that the licensing authority, before they could refuse a licence, must hear the licensee who is affected, but they may renew a licence without hearing the member of the public who has raised the objection. It is not at all the same thing.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 939.

Expiring Annuities.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Chancery Fund Annuities, amounting to £2,324,516 a year, and the Converted Annuities, amounting to £684,000 a year, expire in 1906; and if it is proposed to follow the precedent of 1884 by creating fresh annuities for the purpose of cancelling an equivalent capital amount of Consols.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (for Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN): The Annuities in question will expire in the course of next year. I cannot anticipate the arrangements to be made in future Budgets.

*MR. McCRAE: Is it not necessary for the Government to proceed by legislation previous to the time the annuities expire?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS asked for notice of that Question.

Irish Land Stock.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can inform the House why Irish Land Stock, redeemable in 1921, is domiciled only at the Bank of Ireland, whereas the stock, redeemable in 1933, is domiciled at both London and Dublin, with the result that the earlier issue stands about two points below the later issue owing to its having a more restricted market.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (for Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN): Guaranteed Land Stock under the Purchase of Land Act, 1891, was issued by the Irish Land Commission direct to Irish landowners, and was most conveniently inscribed in the books of the Bank of Ireland. Guaranteed 2¾ per cent. stock under the Land Act, 1903, was issued for public subscription and inscribed partly at the Bank of England and partly at the Bank of Ireland. Any holder of the earlier stock who desires to have it inscribed in the Bank of England can effect the transfer by the procedure provided in the National Debt Act, 1870. I do not think the difference of price of the two stocks is owing to this cause, but to the fact that very little of the Guaranteed Land Stock ever comes into the market.

Hanley Telegraph Staff and Duties at Stoke.

MR. SHAW (Stafford): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the telegraph staff at Hanley are frequently required to travel to Stoke to perform telegraph duties, a distance of two miles; that the practice has been to allow the men thirty minutes for the purpose of journey from office to office; and that the Department, as dating from 25th March, has declined to continue the custom; and, if so, whether, seeing that a duty of divided attendances is completed in two different towns, he will explain why the alteration has been made.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I am inquiring into the matter, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

The Government and the National Telephone Company's Employees.

LORD BINGHAM (Surrey, Chertsey): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the dissatisfaction existing among the staff of the National Telephone Company as to the uncertainty of their position under the recent agreement with the company as regards their transfer to the Post Office service in the event of the purchase of the company's system in 1911; whether he has received any representations on the subject; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

LORD STANLEY: I am aware that some anxiety exists among the staff of the National Telephone Company, and I have received two memorials from different classes of the staff pointing out the difficulties of their position in view of the fact that the agreement for the purchase of the company's system imposes no definite obligation on the Government to offer them employment in the Post Office service after 1911, and asking that deputations may be received to make further representations on the subject. These memorials are receiving my careful consideration, and I hope to be able shortly to receive the proposed deputations. In the meantime I may, perhaps, say, without in any way pledging my successor, that, in view of the extent and nature of the business of the company to be taken over, I think it only reasonable to suppose that it may probably be found necessary to transfer to the Post Office service all efficient members of the executive staff previously required by the company for its proper performance. Those persons who are appointed to the established staff of the Post Office will at once benefit by the conditions as to pension which apply to that staff, but I cannot hold out any hope that operators and other classes who are not entitled to any pension under the conditions of their present employment in the company's service can be allowed to have the period of that service taken into account in reckoning their Post Office pensions. In the case of those members of the staff who contribute to the present pension fund, it is expressly stipulated in the agreement that any obligation arising out of their service previous to the transfer falls to be met by the company. It will be open to the Committee which will, I hope, soon be appointed to consider the agreement to hear representations of the company's staff, if they think it desirable to do so; but I ought to add that the agreement with the company has been signed, and cannot now be modified in any respect.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) asked if the noble Lord would agree to the appointment of a special labour representative on the Committee so as to make sure that the interests of the employees were properly safeguarded?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. The Committee has been nominated in the usual way. I had representations made to me as to placing certain representatives on it and I at once acceded to the request. I think the Committee will fairly represent all sections in the House.

Australian Mail Contracts.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is now in a position to make a statement in regard to the Australian mail contracts; and, in view of the inconvenience to Australian merchants and others, whether he will urge an early settlement of the question by the Australian Government.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member will have seen, as I have, a statement in the Press that an arrangement has been arrived at between the Australian Government and the Orient Line for a fortnightly service. No confirmation of this contract has as yet reached either the Post Office or the Colonial Office, but I sincerely hope the report will turn out to be true.

Cost of Telephonic Communication between London and Paris.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can see his way to reduce the present charges for telephone messages, eight shillings for three minutes conversation from London to Paris, to two shillings and sixpence for three minutes conversation over the same line; what is the estimated loss on such a reduction; and whether the line is now fully employed.

LORD STANLEY: The charges for telephonic conversations between London and Paris are fixed by International agreement, and I do not feel able to propose any reduction. The service is necessarily a costly one, owing to the exceptional nature of the land lines and cables required, and the limited amount of traffic which each line will carry. At night conversations for six minutes at the charge of eight shillings are now allowed to regular subscribers, and this arrangement, which may work out at a good deal less than a farthing a word, has been found useful to journalists in both cities. I do not think the demand for conversations is restricted by the present charges, as the lines are fully employed during business hours. If the charge were reduced from eight shillings to two shillings and sixpence per conversation there would therefore, I think, be a proportionate reduction of revenue.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: Is not a very large profit made at the present rate?

Lord STANLEY: I do not know if it is large, but I believe there has been a profit.

London and Paris Post Office Orders.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a money order for 5s. obtained in a Paris post office and payable in London costs less than 1d. (10 centimes) for commission, whereas a Post Office money order from London to Paris for the same amount is charged 6d. commission; and whether he can see his way to make a reduction in this charge.

Lord STANLEY: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension as to the commission charged in this country for the issue of a money order for 5s. payable in Paris. It would be 4d. only, as in the case of any money order for a sum not over £1 payable abroad. The rates of commission for such orders were reduced last year after exhaustive consideration; and I am not prepared to make further reductions.

Egyptian Postal Rates.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that penny postage is in operation from this country to Malta and Aden; and whether he will open negotiations with the Egyptian authorities for the extension of the penny post to Egypt.

Lord STANLEY: I am fully aware that the penny rate of postage applies to letters sent from this country to Malta and Aden. That rate was specially established as a means of facilitating postal communication within the British Empire; and Egypt is not in the same position as the Colonies and Protectorates included in the scheme.

Savings Bank Deposits.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that two halfpenny postage stamps in lieu of a penny stamp will not be received on the savings bank's forms for deposits up to a shilling, and if he will, for the convenience of children who are depositors, give instructions that halfpenny stamps may also be received in numbers not less than two.

Lord STANLEY: Although the stamp deposit forms were intended to bear twelve penny stamps, it is not the practice to refuse them when stamps of other values are affixed in the proper spaces, provided the total value of the stamps on a form is one shilling.

London Boards of Guardians and the Unemployed.

Mr. CROOKS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can inform the House of the amount expended by each board of guardians in London out of the local rates for the relief of distress caused by lack of employment for the last four months.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I am not at present in a position to give this information, but I will see what particulars of the kind desired can be furnished in connection with other information which I propose to obtain with reference to the relief of distress during the past winter.

Mr. BENN (Devonport): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to present any Report on the work of the Unemployed Committee?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand that a Report is being drawn up by the Committee, and when I have seen it I will consider whether it shall be laid on the Table.

Borrowing Powers of Municipalities.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will consider the advisability of placing a limit upon the borrowing powers of municipalities.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has asked me to reply to this Question. I am afraid that I could not undertake to propose legislation with the object which my hon. friend has in view; but I may mention that the greater part of the loans raised under the general law by the councils of municipal boroughs and urban and rural districts are raised under the Public Health Acts, and that these Acts place a limit on the borrowing powers which they confer on local authorities.

Nitrogen-Producing Bacteria.

Sir WALTER PALMER (Salisbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been drawn to experiments which have been carried on in America with a view to the propagation and use upon the land of nitrogen-producing bacteria; whether he is aware that certain rights relating to the method of preparation of these bacteria are the property of the United States Government, and that that Government is distributing packets of these bacteria free of charge to any farmers who apply for them, and that the result of such distribution has been beneficial for farming; and, if so, can he say whether any rights relating to the preparation of these nitrogen-producing bacteria would prevent His Majesty's Government from adopting a similar course; and, if not, whether he is prepared to recommend that a similar free distribution be adopted in this country.

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): Yes, my attention has been directed to the interesting experiments to which my hon. friend refers, and we have published some articles on the subject in our monthly journal, with copies of which I shall be happy to supply him. Experiments as to the value of nitrogen-producing bacteria are now being carried out under our auspices by several of the agricultural colleges in this country, and so soon as the results are known we shall consider what further action in the matter can be taken in the interest of British agriculturists. I understand that the process of producing and cultivating the bacteria has been patented by the United States Department of Agriculture, but I gather that the Department do not propose indefinitely to continue its gratuitous distribution. There appears to be nothing to prevent the manufacture and sale of the material in this country.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): Will the benefit of the experiments extend to Ireland?

*Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES: Yes, Sir.

Members Smoking-Room

Mr. BIGWOOD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he is aware of the difficulty Members of this House frequently find in procuring seats in the smoking-room; and whether he could see his way to recommend some improvement in the accommodation now provided.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The First Commissioner is quite aware of the limited accommodation at the House for hon. Members wishing to smoke, and much regrets that more space is not available. Additional chairs have lately been provided; but there seems no way at present of finding extra room.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the noble Lord represent to the First Commissioner the desirability of utilising one of the rooms of the Library?

Lord BALCARRES: I do not think the First Commissioner would accede to that suggestion.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) Why not take one of the rooms from the House of Lords which are not used at all?

Lord BALCARRES: Those rooms do not come within the province of the First Commissioner.

Scottish Fisheries—Cruisers for Police Duty.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that the Board of Admiralty are now offering for sale obsolete war vessels;

and will he consider the desirability of securing one or more such vessels for sea police duties in the Moray Firth and on the seaboard of the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

*THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Secretary for Scotland does not think that obsolete war vessels could be either competently or economically employed in the service referred to by the hon. Member.

Scottish Congested Districts Board.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate, seeing that the Prime Minister has expressed the opinion that more funds are desirable and could be usefully employed for the purposes of the Congested Districts Board (Scotland), will he arrange to confer with Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to secure the allocation of additional funds.

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: The Secretary for Scotland does not propose at present to apply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for additional funds for the purposes referred to by the hon. Member.

Irish Agricultural Department Endowment Fund.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will furnish a Return showing, with dates, the names and positions of any officers who have received payments out of the Endowment Fund of the Irish Agricultural Department since its inception, stating in each case the reasons for such payment.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): This information will be collected and communicated to the hon. Member; but, for the reason stated yesterday†, I do not propose to lay the Return on the Table of the House.

Untenanted Lands in County Waterford.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have entered into negotiations for the purchase of any untenanted lands in the county Waterford; and whether they have already acquired any tract of such land, and how much, with a view to providing new holdings for evicted tenants.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of about 300 acres of untenanted land in the county.

Iveagh-Pirrie Motor Scheme.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what is the cause of delay in putting the Iveagh-Pirrie motor scheme into operation at Clonaslee, Queen's County, the inhabitants having petitioned in favour of its adoption in the district.

MR. WALTER LONG: This Question is one entirely for the promoters of the scheme. I have no information on the subject.

Mountmellick Petty Sessions Clerkship.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sergeant Fitzsimons is candidate for the position of petty sessions clerk at Mountmellick; and whether it is in accord with the Police Code and the rules an dregulations of the Royal Irish Constabulary that a member of the force should canvass magistrates for their votes in connection with an appointment not yet declared vacant.

MR. WALTER LONG: Sergeant Fitzsimons is not a candidate for this appointment, and has not canvassed the magistrates for it.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as Section 6, 14 and 15 Vic. (1851), prescribes that upon the suspension of any clerk of petty sessions the sub-inspector of constabulary or the head constable of the district shall take charge of the books and papers, he will state why Sergeant Fitzsimons was appointed to substitute the petty sessions clerk of Mountmellick who has been suspended.

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† See page 319.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The section provides that either of the officers mentioned "or such other person as the Justices shall authorise" shall take over the books, etc., on the suspension of the clerk. Sergeant Fitzsimons was duly authorised by the Justices under that provision.

Irish Teachers' Grievances.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Secretary to the Irish National Education Board has written to a teacher stating that, under the operation of the new rule 127 (b), the teacher's salary may be reduced from £140 to £56 per annum; whether there is any other branch of the public service in which, when reforms are being effected, the men who have spent their lives in the service are so sacrificed; and whether, in the working of this rule, steps will be taken to insure that no teacher at present in the service will be injuriously affected.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The manager of the Aughrim Boys' and Girls' National Schools was informed on the 21st March that if the average attendance at the boys' school fell below thirty-five the salary of the principal teacher would be reduced from £130 to £116 per annum, and that if the average fell below twenty it would be reduced to £56 per annum; but he was told at the same time that rule 127 (b) applied only to future enrolments, and it was suggested that the best course to adopt would be to amalgamate the boys' and girls' schools, making the master the principal of the combined school. If this were done the salary of the master would not be reduced, but, on the contrary, would be increased, and he would become eligible for promotion to the highest grade of teachers, as the average attendance at the combined school would be over seventy. The salary of the mistress would remain, as at present, under special Treasury sanction. I may add that I will take the earliest opportunity of thoroughly investigating this matter, and I would ask hon. Members to be good enough to defer any further Questions on the subject until after the Easter recess.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Is it not the fact that 160,000 children under eight years of age will be transferred under this rule, and that the Treasury will thus effect a saving of £75,000 yearly.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The duty of the Treasury is to see that the public money is properly spent without injustice either to the public or to the employed.

Irish Public Bodies Order—Mayo Protests.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received resolutions from the Mayo County Council and the Mayo District Asylum pointing out the inconvenience and expense that would be involved in putting the new Public Bodies Order into practice, and the unworkable character of many of its provisions, especially in regard to district asylums; and whether, in view of the fact that the Orders now in force, which were devised by the Local Government Board itself, have given satisfaction generally, the new Order will be withdrawn.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The resolution of the county council merely asked permission to adopt a special form of book, and this application will receive consideration. The resolution of the district asylum committee was to the effect stated, but the Board pointed out in reply that no changes had been made in the system of asylum accounts which were not rendered necessary by recent legislation or were not suggested by experience. It is not intended to withdraw the Order.

Killasser (Swinford) Unemployed.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Mayo, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland why the men whose names have been sent in to the Local Government Board from the parish of Killasser, Union of Swinford, have not yet been put on relief works.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Board have authorised the employment of the representatives of sixty-five families in this parish.

Kilmeedy National Schools, Limerick.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the manager of the national schools in Kilmeedy, county Limerick, applied to the Board of National Education in Ireland for a grant-in-aid to build new schools there, which was promised in December, 1903; that subsequently, in 1904, the Board made it a condition that the boys under eight years of age attending the schools must be sent to the girls' school, and that, in the event of the average daily attendance in the boys' school not warranting the appointment of an assistant, the boys' and girls' schools should be amalgamated, to which conditions the manager refused to comply; if he can state what was the reason for insisting on these conditions after the promise to give the grant-in-aid had been made; what was the character of the inspector's report of the present schools for three years previous to the application for the grant-in-aid; whether, between that time and the date on which the aforesaid conditions were made for the obtaining of the grant, did any change for the worse take place in the character of the schools; and whether he will take steps to remove these conditions to enable the schools to be built.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The manager applied for a building grant, but no promise to accede to it was made by the Commissioners. He was informed that, in the event of his application being favourably entertained, the infant boys should be sent to the girls' school; and, further, that it was expected that he would amalgamate the boys' and girls' schools if the average attendance of boys did not warrant, within a reasonable time, the appointment of an assistant teacher. The character of the inspector's report on the instruction imparted in these schools for the three years previous to the receipt of the application for a building grant was satisfactory, and no falling off in the efficiency of the teachers has since been reported.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether, if the conditions required by the Board of National Education in Ireland for obtaining a grant-in-aid for the building of the Kilmeedy National Schools were complied with by the manager and the male and female schools amalgamated, in the event of the boys' school not warranting the appointment of an assistant, would the principal teacher of the female school be reduced to the position of assistant; and what effect would that have on her present position as teacher.

Mr. WALTER LONG: If the conditions referred to were complied with and the male and female schools were amalgamated, the principal teacher of the female school would be reduced to the position of assistant teacher; but, under special regulations sanctioned by the Treasury, she would retain her present grade salary.

Irish Railway Goods Rates.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, under the Act amalgamating the Waterford and Limerick Railway with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, the latter were bound to give facilities to the public equal to those enjoyed by them previous to the amalgamation, and that, since the amalgamation, the rate per ton for tea from London to Rathkeale, viâ Waterford, has been raised from 44s. 10d. per ton to 53s. 4d. per ton, or 8s. 6d. per ton more; and whether he will take steps to see that the terms of the Act in this respect are carried out.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Act provides that the actual rates charged on 30th June, 1900, shall not be increased without the consent of the Railway and Canal Commissioners. The Department are not aware of any instance, in which this provision has been contravened.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire if the facts stated in the Question are not correct?

Mr. WALTER LONG: Certainly, but if they are it seems to me that the people aggrieved have the power of appeal open to them. If they prefer, however, to open communications through the Government I will consider it.

Limerick Malicious Damage Claims.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that upon the hearing of two claims by farmers for compensation for malicious destruction of hay, at Limerick Quarter Sessions last week, Head-Constable Doherty expressed the opinion that the hay was burned on behalf of the applicant, whereas County Court Judge Adams rejected that opinion, which he said was unsupported by any tittle of evidence, and awarded the claimant compensation; and whether, with the view of preserving the independence of the Constabulary, he will direct a full inquiry to be made into the circumstances under which the police officer made these unfounded allegations.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The reports that I have received in this matter are not sufficient to enable me to reply to my hon. friend's Question to-day, and I would ask him to defer it until Monday next.

Moher Relief of Distress Scheme.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state why the solicitors acting for Lord Charles Beresford refused to allow the construction of the proposed Moher relief of distress road in county Cavan.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The reason given by the solicitors was that the consent of their client to the construction of the road had not been obtained, and that the road would only benefit a few people.

In reply to a further Question by Mr. Vincent Kennedy—

Mr. WALTER LONG said the consent of the landlord was very properly required before these works could be undertaken. The relief of distress had been dealt with with great liberality.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Will you make representations to Lord Charles Beresford on the subject?

Mr. WALTER LONG: They have been made direct.

Belfast and London Mail Service.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can say how long have the negotiations between himself and the railway companies in reference to the proposed change in the mail between Belfast and London already taken; and when he thinks they will be completed.

Lord STANLEY: I have for some time past been in communication with the railway companies respecting an improvement in the mail service from Belfast to England, but I am afraid I cannot say when a decision will be arrived at. I should perhaps explain that I am endeavouring to arrange for a later despatch of the present mail by the Larne and Stranraer route, as the improvement which could thus be effected would be more general than that to be gained by the establishment of a new service viâ Greenore. As the hon. Member is aware, several companies are concerned in the service by this route, and more time is therefore occupied in the negotiations.

Mr. SLOAN: How long have the communications been going on?

Lord STANLEY: Since November last year.

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill.

Mr. BENN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the majority of the House in favour of the Second Reading of the Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill on Friday last, he will give facilities for the further progress of the measure this session.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot hold out any hope of special facilities. As the hon. Gentleman is no doubt aware, it is not usual to promise them to private Members except in the case of non-contentious Bills, and these cases are exceedingly rare.

The Aliens Bill.

Mr. FORDE RIDLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state the date of the introduction of the Aliens Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I can promise that this Bill will be introduced the week after next, at all events I see no obstacle at present in its way.

Vaccination of Public Servants.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that candidates for the public service are not allowed to take up appointments unless they have been vaccinated; and, seeing that this regulation penalises candidates who object to vaccination, will he so amend the regulations as to make it competent for such persons to secure their appointments. I hope the Question is now in the understanding of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, yes, Sir; I have always understood the hon. Gentleman's Questions on this subject, but I have had some doubts as to whether he always understood my Answers. All I can say in reply to the hon. Gentleman's Question is that, in the opinion of the authorities, vaccination is a surgical or medical operation which ought to be performed. Until that decision is reversed, I do not see any reason for altering the rule which at present exists in the Civil Service.

Mr. WEIR: Then will the right hon. Gentleman induce the Local Government Board to see that a supply of pure glycerinated calf lymph is afforded to every medical man?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that is being done.

Mr. WEIR: It is not.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: At any rate, the supply of pure vaccine lymph is quite sufficient for the Civil Service.

Scottish Congested Districts Amendment Bill.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, seeing that the Congested Districts (Scotland) Amendment Bill is supported by all Highland Members, will he make arrangements with a view to secure its Second Reading before Easter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that I cannot find the time asked for.

Ministers and Company Directorships.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Mr. Gerald Loder, the newly appointed Junior Lord of the Treasury, who is a director of four companies, of which one is the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, and another the Standard Bank of South Africa, will retain these directorships or any, and, if so, which of them in conjunction with his position of a Minister of the Crown in the Finance Department of the Government; and, if so, on what grounds can the retention of these directorships, or any of them, by Mr. Gerald Loder be justified.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Gentleman asked substantially the same Question on a previous occasion. I do not think I have anything to add to the Answer I then gave.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman say "yes" or "no" to my Question.

*__Mr. SPEAKER__: I must say when I read the Question on the Paper this morning it appeared to me to be the same Question as was put yesterday.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: No, Sir, it is not the same Question.

*__Mr. SPEAKER__: Will the hon. Member point out the difference.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: In the former Question I asked about four directorships In this I refer to two specific ones, the holding of which I contend is not consistent with his position.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The four included the two. The Question is the same as the previous one, but if the hon. Gentleman thinks there is something in it, not covered by the Answer, he had better frame another and more specific Question.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, Sir, I will.

Sale of Butter Bill.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that the Sale of Butter Bill has been discussed during the last two sessions of Parliament, he will take the Second Reading of it an an early day, with the view of having it passed into law this session.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Although I cannot name a day for the Second Reading, I hope the Bill will be passed this session.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to have the Second Reading before Easter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I can make no promise.

Early Closing (Saturday) Intoxicating Drinks (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give facilities, this session, to pass the Early Closing (Saturday) Intoxicating Drinks (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to accept as an Answer to this Question the reply I have just given to the hon. Member for Devonport.

Sparkbrook and Enfield Factories.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the Departmental Committee upon the Sparkbrook and Enfield Small Arms Factories is likely to report.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There was no Departmental Committee on these factories, but there was an Inter-Departmental Committee on a larger question with which the factories are connected. I cannot promise any day for their Report.

Royal Commission on Church Disorders.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the Report of the Royal Commission now sitting on Church Disorders will be issued.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: A similar Question was addressed to me on 21st February†. The Committee will report, I believe, in the course of the year, but I have no power either to retard or hasten their deliberations.

The Prime Minister and the Retaliation Resolution.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question as to which I have communicated with him privately—whether his attention has been called to the statement made last night by the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury, in reply to a Question put by an hon. Member on this side of the House as to the Retaliation Resolution passed by the House last week, that he had communicated to the Prime Minister what passed, and whether the right hon. Gentleman wishes in any way to modify or withdraw the statement he made in the House last week that the sole knowledge he had of that Resolution was derived from the Question put to him by the hon. Member for Oldham on the subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have asked my right hon. friend the Patronage Secretary what passed last night, and I think the hon. Gentleman opposite may be under some misapprehension. The Question of the hon. Member for Oldham related to the terms of the Resolution and what passed in regard to it. [Opposition cries of "No."] I was not acquainted with its terms, and my right hon. friend did not inform me of its terms. He was not himself aware of the fact that the Resolution was passed *nemine contradicente*, and therefore he could not give me information which was not in his possession. He did tell me that there had been a debate, and he also informed me that my conduct had been the subject of animadversion in a conversation that arose after twelve o'clock at night. He did not tell me what had been said about me, because he knows I have no interest in that subject.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 780.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he still adheres to his statement that his sole knowledge as to what appeared to have taken place was derived from the Question of the hon. Member for Oldham?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It was the sole knowledge relative to the Question of the hon. Member for Oldham. I have told the House what my right hon. friend the Patronage Secretary did give me information about. If the House thinks that that was relative to the Question of the hon. Member, then I misled the House; but I do not think it was relative to it.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): Does the right hon. Gentleman live up in a balloon?

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us, as he says he did not know the terms of the Resolution, whether it is not his habit to read the Order-book of the House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not know the terms of the Resolution, because there was really no reason why I should make myself acquainted with them.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: There was.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There was not. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman, if he had been Leader of the House, would have made himself acquainted with them. I did what I thought was necessary in the circumstances in which I was placed. And what were those circumstances? They were these, that I had explained, at great length, to the House that in my judgment these continued Motions on one question brought our proceedings into some ridicule and that I meant to have no more to do with them. That being the case, what was there blameworthy in my conduct?

Mr. BRYCE: If I may venture to say so, I will not trouble the right hon. Gentleman with any further Question, being quite satisfied with things as they stand.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals) Bill: Sir Charles Dilke; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Thomas Roe.

Mr. Halsey further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures;—Mr. Tennant; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 142.]

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 143.]

PRIZE COURTS BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 144.]

NEW BILLS.

PUBLIC HEALTH (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and tenure of office of Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors; and for other purposes," presented by Dr. Hutchinson; supported by Mr.

William Abraham, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Ernest Gray, Colonel Legge, Mr. Whittaker, Mr. Fenwick, Major Jameson, and Sir John Tuke; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 146.]

LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT (LONDON) BILL.

"To authorise the London County Council to provide receiving houses for the reception of persons mentally afflicted or alleged to be of unsound mind, and to authorise the detention of such persons in such houses, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Sir John Tuke; supported by Mr. Burns, Mr. Benn, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Brigg, and Dr. Hutchinson; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 147.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS (REGISTRATION) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and registration of Parliamentary Voters, and for other purposes relating to Elections," presented by Mr. Cremer; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Parrott, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham); to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 148.]

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

"To provide for the Registration of Firms and Persons carrying on business under trade names," presented by Mr. Emmott; supported by Sir James Heath, Sir William Holland, and Sir Walter Palmer; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 12th, and to be printed. [Bill 149.]

COUNTY COURTS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to County Courts," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir James Woodhouse, Sir William Holland, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. J. A. Thomas; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 150.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (REPORTS OF MONEY COMMITTEES).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committee of Ways and Means and Committees authorising the expenditure of Public Money, other than the Committee of Supply, may be entered upon at any hour after Midnight, though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he felt bound to offer opposition to the Motion, and he would like to point out that no reasons whatever had been advanced for that infraction, as he might call it, of the Standing Orders of the House. Nothing had been alleged to warrant the Motion which the right hon. Gentleman had just made, neither had he told them for what purpose the Order was required. or whether there was any Bill of such a pressing character which rendered it desirable or necessary to pass it. He would like the House to bear in mind that they were now living under the Standing Orders of 1902, which seriously curtailed the opportunities of private Members, and which enabled the Government to monopolise nearly the whole of the time of the House. It has been calculated that last session the Government took no less than seven-eighths of the time of the House, leaving only the remaining eighth for private Members, and now they were proposing a Rule which would still further limit the opportunities of private Members. Again, it should not be forgotten that the House agreed to meet at two o'clock—an early hour and extremely inconvenient to many Members—on the condition that as a rule they should not be kept in the House after midnight. He therefore looked upon this proposal which would keep Members after twelve o'clock as an infraction of the contract under which their proceedings were now governed, and he did think that before they passed such a Resolution some reasons should be advanced in support of it.

Under the Standing Orders the Twelve O'clock Rule could be suspended only for business which came within four categories, namely, Bills which originated in Committee of Ways and Means, proceedings in pursuance of Acts of Parliament, proceedings in pursuance of Standing Orders, and proceedings excepted by special Motion made by a Minister of the Crown. Again, there was a provision rendering it necessary that a Bill so dealt with should be under consideration at the time of the interruption of business, but this it was now proposed to do away with by a Sessional Order, and he ventured to suggest it constituted a very strong departure from the spirit of the original agreement. When the Standing Orders of 1902 were introduced they were led to believe in their finality, but, as a matter of fact, there was no finality, and both last year and the year before a similar Motion to this was made which further restricted the rights of the House, further interfered with the convenience of Members, and at the same time considerably enlarged the powers of the Government. The Prime Minister had given the House to understand that he did not intend to stay after midnight, and if he went a large number of Members would naturally follow his example, with the result that these important questions would be discussed in a depleted House.

He would like to ask one or two Questions. Why was this Resolution required? What sort of Bills was it intended to refer to? Was it intended to facilitate the further creation of irregular debt which was concerned with public works? If so, then he thought that the House should strongly resist it. He wished to put the matter as strongly as possible, and he complained, first, that no reason was given for this Motion; secondly, that, if there was a reason, the objects or nature of the Bills to come under it should be specified; and thirdly, his suggestion was that the proposal constituted a very serious infraction of the bargain made with the House when the Standing Orders of 1902 were passed. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would, before the debate closed, give them some explanations on those points.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he certainly thought that the House was bound to make a protest not only against the Resolution, but against the way in which it had been proposed. The right hon. Gentleman had moved it simply by a nod of his head as if it were a mere matter of course. But it was nothing of the kind; and the right hon. Gentleman, having spent so much time in the year 1902 on a brand-new set of Standing Orders, certainly ought now, when he was proposing, without explanation and without any justification whatever, a new Sessional Order, to be called upon to state his reasons. Before a vote was taken he ought to tell them for what particular business it was desired to suspend the Twelve O'clock Rule. This was a Sessional Order which would entirely override the new Standing Orders passed after so much discussion only two years ago. In 1903 this Sessional Order was carried by a majority, but in opposition to the wishes of a very considerable minority. In 1904 it was again proposed, but it was unanimously rejected by the House of Commons, and, therefore, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman was in a position to quote any precedent for his present proposal. One of the chief arguments raised in the House in support of the Twelve O'clock Rule was that it would prevent Supply and other financial business coming on after midnight, and it certainly had been a perfect scandal that business of that nature should be dealt with in the early hours of the morning when the House was depleted, when proper discussion could not take place, and when there was no probability of the proceedings being reported. Now the right hon. Gentleman was proposing, almost at the beginning of the session, a Sessional Order which would operate for the whole session, and which would enable him to take very important business after midnight. He was making this proposal without a single word of explanation, and hon. Members who wished to safeguard the rights of private Members, especially in regard to the discussion of financial matters, should most vigorously protest against this proceeding. He would not, indeed, be surprised if the Motion were defeated as last year, but whatever its fate, he hoped that the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who had done most valuable service in the past in protecting the rights of disscussion in that House, especially on financial matters, would receive the support which he deserved.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) said he hoped there would be no opposition to the passing of the Order, which he was sure was for the convenience not merely of the present or of future Governments, but of the House itself. It was perfectly true he did not introduce the Resolution by any statement of reasons, and why did he not do so? The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had referred to it as if it had never been heard of before, and he had not dealt with its antecedent history.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I said it was passed in 1903 and was again brought foward last year and defeated.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said that the right hon. Gentleman certainly had carried the history back to 1903, but the Resolution was one which in substance, and even in terms, had been passed, he believed, without any discussion, debate, or objection by different Administrations over a long period of years.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: We are now under new rules.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said it was perfectly true that new rules had been brought in and they were not yet finished. They were never intended to be a complete settlement of the regulations regarding the business of the House for all time. He was not asking the House to make this a Standing Order, because that would necessarily involve a longer debate. He would like to point out that this Order differed from its predecessors in one important respect. Under its old form Reports of Supply were taken away from the operation of the Twelve O'clock Rule, but now Reports of Supply were left under it. It would be in the memory and experience of many hon. Members how Reports of Supply had had to be dealt with in the small hours of the morning, but now the greater part of the financial business of the House was altogether outside the purview of this Sessional Order. The Budget Bill was exempted from the Twelve O'clock Rule, but most of the financial business, and especially Reports of Supply, was not touched by it.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): No, but then you have automatic closure for Reports of Supply.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, in conclusion, said he was sure that all sections of the House would desire that this Sessional Order should be passed. It would not be to the advantage of either one Party or the other, but it would be for the convenience of the whole House, and, under the circumstances, he trusted that they would not further occupy time which it was desired to allocate for the discussion of other business.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said the Prime Minister had not answered a single one of the Questions put by the hon. Member for King' Lynn. Everything depended on the Bills involving money which the Government intended to introduce during this session. Undoubtedly, some important Money Bills were to be introduced. They had had it from the Government that it would be necessary to have a Military Works Bill, and a Naval Works Bill this session, and it was within their memory that these Bills were usually introduced very late in the session, and that the most important portion of the discussion on them always took place on the Report of the Resolution on which they were founded. Now, this Sessional Order would enable that step to be entered upon after midnight, and he thought that would seriously militate against the proper consideration of these questions. Those Bills were, after all, kind of supplementary military and naval budgets, and it was most important that the House should have full and ample opportunity of discussing the financial bearing of the Bills at a reasonable hour of the evening. He, therefore, hoped that the Prime Minister would be able to exempt from the operation of this Sessional Order those important subjects.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked if the Prime Minister would state what Bills he intended to deal with under this rule.

He presumed they would be the Consolidated Fund Bill, the Appropriation Bill, the Naval Works Bill, and the Military Works Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said that the Resolution would undoubtedly apply to all four of those Bills, and he did not think there was anything wrong in that. He would like to point out that there were very full and ample opportunities of discussing the Military and Naval Works Loans Bills on their various stages. In his opinion the Motion was in the interests of public business, and was for the convenience of hon. Members.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said it was quite clear that the number of measures affected by the passing of this Resolution would be unusually large this year.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think so.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said three more Bill would be affected than last year. There would be the extra Consolidated Fund Bill—and in passing he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman when he proposed to introduce it—and there would be the Loan Bills for Naval and Military Works. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that there were full opportunities of discussing Bills founded upon Resolutions in the Committee of Ways and Means, but he would remind the House that in the discussion of all Bills founded on such Resolutions, they had found themselves at every subsequent stage hampered and tied by the terms of the Resolution itself. In view of that he thought it was desirable that there should be an opportunity for discussion before midnight.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It does not touch the Committee stage of the Resolutions at all.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said it touched the Report stage, which was equally important. This was another illustration of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman in treating all financial Bills as mere formalities. If the Report stage were unimportant let it be cut away altogether, but if they were going to maintain the rights of the House let them maintain them to their full extent.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that not one of the Questions put to the Prime Minister in regard to the Motion had been satisfactorily answered by the right hon. Gentleman, and if he had exhausted his right of speech in that debate it was to be hoped that the Secretary to the Treasury would be put up to give further explanations. He would like, in the first place, to ask how it was that last year they got through so well after defeating unanimously a Resolution of this kind. Did not that experience show that the Resolution was quite unnecessary? Then, again, why had it been put down for that day? Was there some reason in regard to the discussions on the War Office Votes which rendered it necessary that it should be taken that afternoon? Thirdly, he would like to know why the Resolution was so widely drawn. The Resolution was much too widely drawn. The House was willing to give all necessary facilities for specific business, and not one of the hon. Members who had spoken on that point but had admitted in principle that it might be necessary with regard to some of their business to take some step of this kind. But this Resolution would include anything. It would include a new transaction like the Cunard Agreement that they had a year or two ago, and was rather too widely drawn to receive the assent of the House. This Resolution was a bad example of the hustling of money business which the Prime Minister had adopted on every occasion. All discussion of money business had either been greatly abridged or entirely destroyed, and he thought the House ought to draw the line. This would, he considered, be a very good occasion upon which to do it, and he asked the Prime Minister to withdraw this Resolution altogether and bring in one in more moderate terms.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he begged to offer his humble protest against any proposal—especially one of this kind—which violated the sanctity of the Twelve O'clock Rule, When the new rules under which they met at two o'clock were submitted to the House, the strong argument of the Prime Minister was that they would be able to get away at twelve o'clock, and they would know if they were going to be kept late. At the time, some of them expressed the opinion that the old system would go on, and that they would never be sure when the business of the House was going to end. If hon. Members looked at the Business Paper it was practically impossible to say when they could get away at twelve o'clock at night, and here they had the Prime Minister actually recommending this proposal to the House because certain Bills could not be commenced until after twelve o'clock at night—a most preposterous suggestion. He thought they had a right to complain that in every possible way, and session after session, raids were being made upon the time of the House and upon the time of hon. Members. Were hon. Members on the other side aware that they were supporting a Resolution which would be taken full advantage of, probably before many sessions were over. What would hon. Members do then? Would they support the Government of the day? As far as he was concerned, he should, even if he was alone, vote against any proposal that the House should sit after twelve o'clock at night. His experience was that sitting after twelve o'clock was not good for the temper of the House, nor was it good for public business, and he ventured to say that no Leader of the House, who gave an impartial opinion, would be inclined to support late sittings. There was no reason why they should, without any notice at all, be called upon to sit after twelve o'clock at night on any occasion when the Patronage Secretary or the First Lord of the Treasury decreed that they should do so. It was the uncertainty against which he protested, because it necessitated hon. Members going to the trouble of inquiring whether or not the Government were going to take the Report stage of a money Bill. He was surprised at the light-heartedness with which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister talked of the Report stage, which had always been regarded as being equal in importance to the Committee stage. In the first place it was the reconsideration by the House of the proposals before the Committee, and, in the second place, it gave hon. Members an opportunity of replying to the case which was put forward by the Minister. It would be a very bad day for the House when the Report stage was looked upon as merely a mechanical matter and as being of no importance at all. The right hon. Gentleman said it did not apply to Supply, but would he undertake that at a later period of the session he would not include Supply in a similar Motion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

Mr. DALZIEL: Yes, but the right hon. Gentleman will guillotine, and the right hon. Gentleman, if I am not mistaken, included Supply at a later period of the session last year.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That was done under the Standing Order.

Mr. DALZIEL went on to say that, as far as the Report stage of Supply last session was concerned, they had no Report stage. What happened was that they had the Committee stage, and then, week after week and month after month, the Report stage was postponed only to be taken under the operation of the guillotine.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member asked me for an undertaking that I will not take the Report stage of Supply after twelve o'clock. I will give the undertaking.

Mr. DALZIEL said the right hon. Gentleman gave that undertaking with the proviso that he would take it when the guillotine stage was reached, which was a very ingenious way of saying that he would postpone the Report stage until it could be taken after twelve o'clock without discussion. What they were doing on that occasion was in the first place to make another attack upon the Twelve O'clock Rule, and in the second place they were practically doing away with the Report stage of these measures, because, although at the present moment only money Bills might be involved, they knew that in the long run this Resolution would be carried session after session until the Report stage was always taken after twelve o'clock at night. Really no case had been presented to the House for this proposal. There was no urgency, and the right hon. Gentleman was not so anxious to get forward legislation as to entitle him to ask them to sit after twelve o'clock at night to deal with these money Bills. He had an idea that perhaps the right hon. Gentleman intended to clear up the money business as soon as possible on top of the Budget, and then go to the country and ask for a fresh lease of power. He did not know whether that was in the right hon. Gentleman's mind in bringing forward this Resolution at the present time. If the right hon. Gentleman stated that he had that notion he would get the Resolution passed without the slightest opposition on that side of the House. His point was as to the uncertainty on the part of Members on that side of the House in regard to whether the Government were going to take money Bills or not. The Government ought to give them some pledge that they would indicate the time when these stages would be taken, or when they intended that the House should sit after twelve o'clock, so that they might have an opportunity of expressing their opinion on that point. In order to secure that some public attention should be given to the Report stage of these measures, he would move as an Amendment to insert in line 4 of the Resolution after the word "may" the following words: "At least two days notice having previously been publicly given." If the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to give them at Question time, two days before, notice when the Report stage would be taken, he would not consider it necessary to press his Amendment, but he considered that the House should at all events have forty-eight hours notice.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'may,' to insert the words 'at least two days notice having previously been publicly given.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Gentleman is reasonable when he asks that these matters should not be suddenly sprung upon the House late at night without any knowledge on the part of hon. Members that we were going to ask them to sit beyond midnight, but I think he is unreasonable when he asks for forty-eight hours notice. I should be quite prepared to say I would not take the Report stage on any one of these Bills in reply to a Question. Will hon. Members undertake to put a Question forty-eight hours beforehand?

MR. DALZIEL: I would rather the right hon. Gentleman undertook to announce and give notice the day before.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will endeavour to do that.

MR. DALZIEL: If we set down a Question he might not be in a position to give an Answer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very well, I will endeavour to give twenty-four hours notice.

MR. DALZIEL: Then I beg to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 241; Noes, 174. (Division List No. 102.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-

Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn J A Glasgow)
Campbell, J. H.M(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. (Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W(Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir J. C.
Dixon-Hartland, SirFredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (WarwickS.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E(Elgin&Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'rH'ml's
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, WalfordD.(Wednesbury
Greene, SirEW(B'rySEdm'nds)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'ndery
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords.N.W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge Sir Robert
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F(Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn.Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End
Lawson, John Grant (YorksNR
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. HnWalter(Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb. (Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, RtHnSir HE(Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W. J. H(Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. W. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H. C(North'mbTyneside
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Waker, Col., William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G.E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton undLyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley(York, E.R.)

Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E..
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hn. James
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Fredk.
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, CaptEC(S. Andrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Guest, Hn. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir(MerthyrTydvil
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E.H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex(Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John GordonSwift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Reid,Sir R. Threshie(Dumfries
Richards, Thos. (W.Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Seely, Maj. J.E.B(Isle ofWight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn CR(Northants)
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas,J.A(Glamorgan,Gower
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York,W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters(NDorset
Wilson, H. J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J.W(Worcestershire,N
Woodhouse, SirJ.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Gibson Bowles and Mr Buchanan.

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committee of Ways and Means and Committees authorising the expenditure of public money, other than the Committee of Supply, may be entered upon at any hour after midnight, though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at home and abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,100,500, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Malcolm*).

***Mr. AINSWORTH** (Argyllshire) said he wished to refer briefly to the question raised by the hon. Member for Stowmarket in regard to the position of the Highland Light Infantry. The main point of the matter had been hardly understood. It referred to the disability which the regiment was under in being brigaded with Lowland battalions. One result of that was that in future the officers and men of the Highland Light Infantry which, after all, was a Highland regiment, and hitherto had been linked with the other Highland regiments, would be interchangeable with the Lowland battalions with which they were brigaded. It would be seen that that would strike a serious, almost a vital, blow at the *esprit de corps* of a Highland regiment, and he was quite sure that the recruiting for the regiment would suffer. While on this subject he also wished to put the case of the Argyll and Sutherland regiment, now stationed at Aldershot. That distinguished regiment had been for a long number of years on foreign service, and immediately on their return home they were sent out to the South African War. On their return from South Africa, instead of being sent to Scotland, they were transferred to Aldershot, where they had been ever since. There they were stationed at Longmoor, which was an unreclaimed swamp, and the ground was so bad that the men could not even get a suitable place to play football. He dared say that it was accidental that the regiment was stationed in so unsuitable a place; but what he wanted to know was why Scotch regiments, and specially Highland regiments, were not stationed in the Highlands. He had been rather surprised to hear his right hon. friend say that it was always easy to get Highland recruits, no matter where Highland regiments were quartered all over the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, the population of the Highlands was not what it used to be, but something might be done to improve that state of things; and certainly the Highland regiments should have every opportunity of getting recruits in those parts of the country with which they had been identified for so very many years.

His right hon. friend said that there was not barrack accommodation in the Highlands for the Highland regiments and that it would be an expensive matter to provide it, an expense which could not be faced at the present moment. Everybody knew that; but the Government were spending £3,500,000 in providing barrack accommodation in South Africa. Now, it was common knowledge that self-government was to be shortly given to the new South African Colonies; and what did the Imperial Government want with barrack accommodation there for between 20,000 and 30,000 troops. Surely some of the money spent in South Africa for barracks might be far better spent in the United Kingdom, especially in the Highlands. Ideas had changed enormously as to what barrack accommodation should be. Formerly it was thought that barracks should be put up only at the headquarters of a regiment; but they should be put up in a healthy part of the country, economically, with every convenience for the troops and where recruiting could be carried on. He was sure that suitable sites could be obtained for such barracks in the Highlands. The Highland regiments had so much to recommend them for their great services, their prestige, and their historical associations that every opportunity should be taken to encourage them—and not run counter to their traditions.

* THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.) thought hon. Members were labouring under a misconception. There seemed to be an idea that a change had been made, or was in contemplation, which would result in the movement of officers or men from one battalion to another. That was a mistake. He was fully alive to the importance of maintaining the traditions which were inseparably associated with the Highland battalions, and if he were not a competent guardian of those traditions, there were plenty of Scottish officers at the War Office who would be quick to express the view the hon. Member for the Stowmarket Division had expressed. The compulsory transfer of officers or men from the Highland Light Infantry to another battalion, Lowland or Highland, would be against the law, and was absolutely outside the contemplation of the War Office. There had never been any suggestion of the kind, and nothing of the kind came within the terms of the Order.

The Appendix to the Army Order referred to regimental districts grouped geographically for the purposes of administration. As far as the Army Order was concerned, there was no intention of grouping the regiments therein referred to into corps or brigades, nor transforming regimental depots into large depots. The Army Order did not deal with regimental depots, but with geographical districts which were placed under the command of brigadiers for more economical and better military supervision. The facts were that under the Report of the Esher Committee it was decided to institute a new administrative officer who was charged with duties which were not connected with training and command, and a certain number of administrative districts had been formed in the United Kingdom, and, naturally, they had been formed on geographical considerations. He would not go into the question whether it was wise or not in 1881 to place the depot of the Highland Light Infantry at Hamilton; but they had to deal with the existing buildings and accommodation. They had to appoint two general officers for Scotland for administrative purposes, and districts had been assigned to them. He did not think that any one, however anxious he might be about the reputation, solidarity, and uniformity of the Highland regiments, could seriously object to their depot which was in the Lowlands being administered by a general officer quartered in the Lowlands. Beyond that the War Office did not go. He trusted the Committee would accept this explanation in good faith, because it was really the whole story.

If he was pressed as to whether it would be desirable to have Highland regiments quartered in the Highlands, all he could say was that that was a part of the proposal he had desired to submit to the House. He would like to see territorial regiments quartered in every part of the United Kingdom, and he believed the time would come when they would see that. Hon. Members might accept his assurance that there was no intention whatever to make any change to the detriment of the Highland regiments, but he could not give a promise that the buildings which had existed at Hamilton since 1881 should be taken away and placed elsewhere.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire) said that although he felt considerable sympathy with the speech of the hon. Member for Stowmarket Division, he would appeal to him on more than one ground not to divide the House on this question. In the first place, it was hardly consistent with the record of the Highland Light Infantry that all these administrative details should be discussed in the House. The officers and men of the Highland Light Infantry were not children; they would doubtless be content if their sentiments were understood by the House, and would do their duty in whatever part of the Kingdom they were called upon to serve. After all, it was not these Highland battalions, but the depot that was involved, and, as the right hon. Gentleman had stated, the Order would not affect the brigading of the battalions upon active service; it was merely for administrative purposes.

Another reason why he thought a division undesirable was that there were limits beyond which the interference of this House with administrative details might be rather mischievous than otherwise. No doubt advantage did sometimes arise from such discussions, as was seen when the Cardwell scheme was on the Table in 1881, and the absurdity of brigading the Cameronian regiment with the Cameron Highlanders was pointed out, with the result that the arrangement was cancelled. He might remind the Committee that when the territorial scheme was instituted considerable liberties were taken with the Scottish Lowland Regiments. He was not a Highlander, but a Lowlander, and if he had been speaking 150 years ago he would probably have had to thank God he was not a Highlander. But the feeling between the Highlands and the Lowlands was very different now, and he believed that nothing had contributed to bring about that change and to unite the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland so much as the action of the Highland regiments on the field of Assaye and the sands of Egypt, and in those seven years of war which began at Vimiera and ended at Waterloo. Considerable changes were made in the Scottish Lowland regiments. All the regiments were put into trews—in spite of the opposition of the Scottish Members. There was nothing more alien to a Lowlander than tartan trousers, and those regiments had worn the trews ever since.

He trusted enough had been said and that the Committee would accept the assurance of the Secretary of State that there was no intention whatever of doing what some had feared, viz., transferring officers and men from one battalion to another in the Hamilton depot. The right hon. Gentleman might bear in mind, however, that there was a strong desire on the part of this gallant regiment, which was second to none in its roll of victories, to be more closely associated with the Highlands; and if by any means, with reasonable economy, it was found possible to provide depot accommodation for the Highland Light Infantry north of the Highland Line, it would give the greatest satisfaction to all concerned. The question of ethnology and ethnography must not be pushed too far, but as it had been stated that the Highland Light Infantry did not consist in great part of Highlanders, he might say that, according to a return of the recruits enlisted at Hamilton during the present quarter, out of eighty-seven recruits three were English, and four were Irish; one was born in India, and one in Australia; the remaining seventy-eight were born in Scotland, and twenty-seven of them in the Highlands. He trusted, however, the right hon. Gentleman would consider the susceptibilities of the Scottish people, a somewhat irritable race, holding very strongly to their old traditions, but easily conciliated if consideration was shown to their feelings.

*Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said the hon. Baronet had spoken a great deal about kilts and trews, but that was not the question before the Committee. The question of kilts was settled the other day by the Prime Minister announcing that it was not the intention of the War Office to make any change. The question now at issue was one, not of clothing, but of officers and men. He might say that on the maternal side he was a Highlander. The hon. Baronet, who declared himself a Lowlander, had spoken about the feeling between Highlanders and Lowlanders as though they would now fall on one another's neck. The hon. Baronet evidently did not know the Highland character. That, however, was not the matter before the Committee. What they had to discuss was the attitude of the War Office towards the Highland Light Infantry by grouping the Regiment in the Lowlands of Scotland. The Secretary of State had said he had no intention to remove officers or men from one battalion to another. There was not sufficient barrack accommodation in Scotland for Highland and Lowland regiments. It was a disgraceful state of affairs that there was only one Highland Regiment quartered in the Highlands of Scotland, viz., the 1st

Royal Highlanders, whose strength is 591 of all ranks. Money had been squandered in South Africa and in erecting barracks at Hong-Kong, but the War Office should look at home first, and not wander over the face of the earth to throw away money on costly barracks. The country was led to suppose some time since that the territorial system would be adopted, and the system would, no doubt, have facilitated recruiting in the Highlands. Highlanders fought better with Highlanders than with a mixture of Highlanders and Lowlanders, or with a mixture of Englishmen or Irishmen. On the 29th of last month, in reply to a Question which he put, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War said that very few of the Highland Light Infantry were Highlanders. What did the right hon. Gentleman say last night in reply to the hon. Member for Stowmarket? He said that the majority of them were Highlanders. How did the right hon. Gentleman reconcile those two statements. Apparently he knew nothing about it. To say that very few of them were Highlanders was all the more disgraceful. At first it was understood that the grouping of the Highland Light Infantry at Hamilton would be only a temporary arrangement, but now it was proposed to make it permanent. Only that day he asked the Secretary of State for War whether, with a view to induce Highlanders to join the Highland Light Infantry, he would consider the practicability of grouping the regiment with other Highland regiments with headquarters at Perth. The right hon. Gentleman replied—

> "The Highland Light Infantry has been open for recruiting in all Scotland for more than three years, and therefore the suggested grouping with other Highland regiments would not appear likely to affect the recruiting in any respect."

He should be very much surprised if Scottish Members quietly accepted the statement made by the Secretary of State for War that this matter would receive every consideration. It would never receive consideration. This year the right hon. Gentleman led the House to believe that this was only a temporary arrangement but now he had made it a permanent arrangement. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested changing the nomenclature of Hamilton, but was that course likely to satisfy a Highlander? Let the Highland Light Infantry be grouped, say, at Perth or Fort George with other Highland regiments. It was not essential that they should be grouped at Hamilton. Surely that was a small request to make, and that was all they were asking for. If Highlanders were to be treated in this fashion the sooner they left off enlisting in the British Army the better. The advisers of the War Office knew nothing about the sentiment of the Scottish or the Highland people. A few years ago when special efforts were made to recruit Highlanders the recruiting sergeants, after marching through the country, only succeeded in recruiting half a dozen at a cost of £95 each. The hon. Member for Stowmarket had said that recruiting had been kept up on account of agricultural depression and poverty amongst the Highlanders, but he denied that. That argument might apply to Stowmarket and Suffolk, but it did not wholly apply to the Highlands of Scotland. The real reason was that Government after Government had failed to redress the grievances of the Highland people, and this had led to a vast increase of the deer forest area, where in former years large families lived in comfort.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is getting rather far away from this Vote.

*MR. WEIR said all he desired to do was to put the hon. Member for Stowmarket right in a statement which he had been allowed to make as to the keeping up of recruiting being due to poverty and agricultural depression. Would the Secretary of State for War consent to make an arrangement of the kind he had suggested? It was so simple that he could only suppose the right hon. Gentleman had been badly advised in his present proposal by some would-be reformer at the War Office, of whom he had been told there were far too many. What difference could it possibly make if the Highland Light Infantry were grouped at Perth or Fort George? People must be born and brought up in Scotland in order to know the Scottish line of thought and Scottish sentiment. The right hon. Gentleman would never have sanctioned a course of this kind if he had known anything about Scottish or Highland sentiment. He sincerely trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would consider the error of his ways, or else the War Office would find increasing difficulty each year in recruiting Highlanders. He, for one, would not advise them to join the Army if Highland regiments were treated in this way.

*Sir ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.) said he was quite sure they would fully accept all the assurances which had been given by the Secretary of State for War. It was very satisfactory to have had those assurances to-day in which they had been told that there was no intention of altering the *status* of the Highland Light Infantry as a Highland regiment, and also that it would be brigaded with the other Highland regiments in case of war. It was not at all surprising that there should have been a little anxiety on the subject. The authorities at the War Office had sometimes shown a tendency to forget the origin and history of the regiment, and there was a fear that they were doing this at the present time. They were, therefore, very glad to have the right hon. Gentleman's assurances that this was not so. They understood that the right hon. Gentleman considered grouping had gone too far and that he could not go back upon the arrangements which had been made. [An Hon. Member: Nonsense.] But could not some other means be found of getting over the difficulty? Could some means not be found of establishing a visible link between the Highland regiments at Perth and the isolated unit at Hamilton which would make it clear to everybody that their connection was being maintained? He need not suggest any particular way because his right hon. friend, with the full knowledge he had of military organisation, would know far better how it could be carried out than he did; but if he could find a way of that kind he felt sure that it would give very great satisfaction, not only to the regiment concerned, but to a large number of people in Scotland who took an interest both personal and historical in this regiment.

Mr. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) said he thought the House had been rather misled by the speeches which had been made that afternoon, and he did not think the Committee had grasped the real point. There existed a very legitimate grievance which was felt by the officers of the Highland Light Infantry, not because they had been brigaded with a Lowland regiment, but owing to the fact that whilst other Highland regiments had been grouped together the Highland Light Infantry had been isolated from the Highland battalion. He urged the Secretary of State for War to give this scheme a little reconsideration. By leaving out altogether the Highland Light Infantry whilst the other regiments had been grouped together a distinct grievance had arisen, and he trusted that that would be a sufficient ground to induce the Secretary for War to reconsider his scheme. He merely brought forward the consideration of Aberdeen as a suitable centre for the grouping of the Highland regiments. Aberdeen possessed large barracks which could be easily extended; it was a seaport town close to Orkney and Shetland, from whence a great many of the recruits came; and also a shipping port between Leith and London; it was a very suitable city for a centre of this kind, and he hoped the Government would take his suggestion into consideration.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) submitted that too much might be made of these historical distinctions and regimental fashions. A colonel of the Connaught Rangers once said that as brave a heart existed under the frieze of the Irish peasant as under the kilt of the Highlander. In this case, however, he thought the demands made by his hon. friend were reasonable. Surely, in deference to the wishes of this distinguished corps, the War Office, which had spent enormous sums on Salisbury Plain, might spend a small sum to build a barrack for a depot for the Highland Light Infantry at Perth.

Mr. DOBBIE (Ayr Burghs) asserted that this question was one which undoubtedly caused a considerable amount of feeling in Highland centres. Reference need only be made to the meeting recently held in Glasgow to protest against what was considered to be the unwise treatment threatened towards the Highland Light Infantry. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that a more enthusiastic non-Party meeting was never held in Glasgow. He would like to say with the hon. Member for Ross that this was not a question merely of clothes or a change of depot. They would not mind things so much, although in the matter of barracks Scotland, and the Highlands in particular, had suffered greatly under the present and previous Governments. What he and other Scottish Members said was that in view of the regrouping of the regiments, the scheme might be made to embrace the Highland Light Infantry, even though it continued its base at Hamilton. He thought that if that small concession could be made by the Secretary for War it would have a most excellent effect on the future recruiting of this famous regiment.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked what was to become of the 3rd and 4th battalions of Highland Light Infantry, two battalions of the Lanarkshire Militia, which had for twenty-five years been connected with the Highland Light Infantry, if the 1st and 2nd battalions were to be moved to Perth or Aberdeen? Speaking as the senior Member for Lanarkshire he could say that they in that county were proud of their association with this gallant regiment, and that the regiment had never complained of being associated with them. He should be very sorry if there were added to the many other decorations of this regiment the order of the boot, as far as Lanarkshire was concerned.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) thought the Secretary for War's scheme for grouping the Scottish regiments was unfortunate. Nothing should be done to interfere with the Highland *status* of the Highland Light Infantry. He trusted that the Secretary for War would give them no more Modder River incidents, so far as the dissociation of the Highland Light Infantry from its friends and colleagues in the Highland Brigade was concerned. There ought to be a War Office apology for that dissociation. He thought it would be a golden bridge out of the difficulty if the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to leave the Highland Light Infantry at Hamilton as a depot, but under the Perth command, with six Highland regiments in Perth and four Lowland regiments in Hamilton. That was a simple thing to do and would absolutely solve the difficulty. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider the matter with General Douglas. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee what regimental depots were to go and what was to happen to them afterwards. Scottish Members would object to the grouping of this regiment with Lowland regiments far away from their comrades in the Highlands.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to say he did not think he should be called upon to speak as to the future, which he could not possibly control. His own desire was perfectly well known, but he could not give any definite pledges.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) moved a reduction of the Vote by £100 for the purpose of raising the question of the Auxiliary Forces as a clear and distinct issue. Without distinction of Party there was a consensus of opinion upon both sides of the House that the proposals of the Secretary for War with regard to the Volunteers would be very detrimental to that force. The right hon. Gentleman was a great military theorist, but as yet there was no practical evidence that the scheme he had proposed was a good one. So far as the proposal for the Army was concerned the right hon. Gentleman had conducted a masterly retreat such as would have done justice to the distinguished Russian General in Manchuria. As far as could be discovered the right hon. Gentleman's scheme had been thrown over by the Cabinet, and the only part that remained was a proposal which would further discourage and disorganise the Volunteer force. The Army scheme of the right hon. Gentleman was a paper scheme. They had a proposal for two Armies, a short and a long-service Army, and for months to come the short-service Army would be as nebulous as the defunct six Army Corps. The right hon. Gentleman deserved credit, however, for having done his best to repair the damage done to the Army organisation by his predecessor. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State at Edinburgh condemned the three years system put forward by his predecessor, and pointed out that although the result of the scheme should have been the furnishing of 16,000 men as drafts for India, the actual number produced was only 900, and that if that system was continued the British infantry would have ceased to exist for fighting purposes in a few years. The foundation of the right hon. Gentleman's long-service system was that recruits were to be enlisted at nineteen and a-half years of age in order that after six months training they might be sent to India. Was that what was now being done? Because, if so, the scheme was a fatal one.

The right hon. Gentleman had claimed that with regard to the Volunteers he was supported by nine-tenths of the Volunteer officers. It was a curious thing that at the War Office they appeared to have a special brand of Volunteer officers, a kind of deathless Army, who were never seen in the light of day. The present position reminded him of the story of the American who, when shown a mummy which was said to be 2,000 years old, said that he did not want to see, but if the guide had any live corpses let him trot them out. That was similar to the request which they made to the right hon. Gentleman. The opinions of Volunteer officers to which the right hon. Gentleman appealed in his Report, they had not had in a tangible form. He made bold to say that the right hon. Gentleman did not understand the Volunteers; at least he did not appreciate the part they could be made to play in our military organisation. The primary duty which might be devolved upon the Volunteers was that of home defence, and in this connection he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the fact that he had treated the Volunteer force as a serious factor. But there was another duty which could be devolved upon the Volunteers, and that was that they should be a large national Reserve which could be called upon in case of national emergency. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had utterly failed to grasp this part of the scheme. He had entirely misread the lesson of the South African War so far as the Volunteers were concerned, and he thought he had been unjust to them, both as regarded the services they had rendered and their willingness to volunteer. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had put the matter in such a way as really to mislead the House. The Volunteers never had the opportunity of offering their unrestricted services, and the invitation extended to them was not a serious invitation but a restricted one offered in such a way that it did not appeal to the *esprit de corps* of the Volunteers as the individual regiments and battalions were only allowed to send a few men to a mixed company.

As to the general question he thought that the right hon. Gentleman had proceeded upon wrong lines altogether. In his judgment we wanted more Volunteers instead of less; we wanted to get as near as possible to universal service without conscription. We should at least give the Volunteers the opportunity that every man capable of bearing arms should be allowed to do so and to undergo a certain amount of training for the defence of his country. He did not speak of the physical training advantage which would result if his proposals were adopted, though that alone was worth all the money in view of its importance to the race, but looking at it from the purely military point of view the Volunteer force would form a very great Reserve in time of danger. He had heard the Volunteers spoken of as the raw material for the Army, but he said that that was wrong. He said the Volunteer at his worst was the half-manufactured article which could easily be made into the efficient soldier. The Volunteers played an important part in the late war, and they enabled the War Office practically to denude this country of trained troops. He thought the right hon. Gentleman forgot that in 1900 the Volunteers were mobilised and a majority of them went under canvas for a month. Did not the right hon. Gentleman realise the great effect that

that had upon foreign nations, and did it not relieve the Regular Forces for service abroad.

The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the reduction of numbers was put in such a way as to be entirely misleading, and it appeared that he had thrown dust in the eyes of such an astute Member as his hon. friend the Member for Oldham. The right hon. Gentleman said that the reduction he proposed this year was a reduction of the strength by 15,000 men, which was five per cent. of the present strength, but what the right hon. Gentleman really was proposing was a reduction of 33 per cent., amounting to 114,000 men, and he did this by mixing up establishment and strength, which in the case of the Volunteers were two very different things. The present establishment of Volunteers was 344,000, but the strength was only 245,000, therefore we had at present only about seventy per cent. of the establishment, and what the right hon. Gentleman was doing was reducing the establishment by 114,000 men, and then saying that it was only a reduction of 15,000 on the strength of the Volunteer force. If the right hon. Gentleman reduced the establishment he would proportionately reduce the strength, and if he reduced the establishment to 230,000 he was very likely to reduce the strength in the same proportion, viz., to 161,000, or if the reduction did not go to that figure, at least it would be the figure which the right hon. Gentleman estimated in his speech of July, and he would reduce the Volunteers to 180,000 men, which was a reduction, according to his own showing, of 65,000. This part of the matter was very much more serious than the House had been led to believe, because they had been made to confuse the two things, the establishment of the Volunteers and the present strength of the force. He asked the right hon. Gentleman how he proposed to carry out this reduction, and he said that the proposed reduction of the establishment was only preliminary and would make way for a very much larger reduction. How was the right hon. Gentleman going to do it? Was he going to abolish battalions, was he going to reduce the numbers of companies, or, in the third place, to have resort to a process of strangulation by making impossible conditions which would disrupt the force.

Mr. McCrae.

The right hon. Gentleman said that his proposals would ameliorate the condition of the Volunteers. He had heard of death being a welcome relief, and in that sense he could understand that the right hon. Gentleman was going to ameliorate the condition of the Volunteers, but in no other sense could he, as a Volunteer officer, look upon these proposals as otherwise than disastrous. If they were carried into effect they would have the result of abolishing the Volunteer force altogether. He thought millions were wasted on the Army, and if the right hon. Gentleman would turn his attention to the question of practical organisation so as to prevent these stores scandals which they had had before them, he would do a great deal more good than he would by this fancy scheme of reform.

So far as schemes of reform were concerned, the right hon. Gentleman was not a missionary of Empire, but he was the apostle of economy. The right hon. Gentleman said last year that unless he was able to produce Estimates on a totally different system, which he indicated would involve considerable economies, he would not again stand at that box. Those were brave words, but the system was unchanged. The right hon. Gentleman's economies had not been effected, and the right hon. Gentleman was still on the Treasury Bench. The ordinary expenditure on the Army was £28,600,000, of which £1,200,000 was spent upon the Volunteers, and if the cost of the Militia were excluded, roughly speaking the cost of the Army was £26,000,000. The Secretary of State, in a statement he issued in August last, showed economies which his scheme was to bring about, apart from the Militia, in effective charges of £1,000,000 sterling. Out of that £1,000,000, £300,000 was deducted from the expenditure on the Volunteers out of a total Vote of £1 200,000, and the paltry sum of £700,000 was to come from the Army out of the £26,000,000. He said that these proposals were farcical and were not such as could be upheld on the ground of economy. He had wondered where the right hon.

Gentleman had got this inspiration with regard to Volunteer finances, but he thought he had found out. He evidently had got his ideas from Lord Esher, of whose Committee they had heard a great deal in regard to Army reform. Lord Esher, speaking at Callander in August last, said that at the present time there was too great a tendency, when the Volunteer force was taken into consideration, to apply to the State for funds, and he should like to state his opinion that that was not a desirable way of obtaining funds for the Volunteers. His idea was, therefore, that the Volunteers should be kept up by voluntary subscriptions. To a certain extent that was evidently the view of the right hon. Gentleman.

The right hon. Gentleman asked were they to reduce the expenditure on the Army and the Militia and not to reduce the expenditure on the Volunteers, and said that by the ashes of his fathers and the temple of his gods he could do no such thing. But did he understand what the proposal meant? The Volunteers were quite willing that their expenditure should be reduced in ratio with the reductions made with regard to the Army, but if the right hon. Gentleman made a reduction in the Army equal to that which he proposed for the Volunteers, it would mean that he would reduce the expenditure of the Army by £6,500,000. The real fact was that the War Office did not understand the Volunteers, and would not take advice from those who had practical experience, although the right hon. Gentleman said he had every sympathy with the Volunteers. He thought the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman as put before the House would be fatal to the existence of the Volunteer force. Though the present Secretary of State differed from his predecessor in many things they were at one in that they had adopted a scientific method of flouting the Volunteer force. They were going to strangle a force they could not openly kill. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would get out of this haze of wordy platitudes and tell the House in a few simple words what he was going to do. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to give a pledge that for the present year, at any rate, there should be no reduction in the Volunteer force, and that he would allow his proposals to germinate in the public mind so that the public could understand the proposal which at present the House did not. Parliament was moribund, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider this suggestion and would give up his proposal, which so far as the Volunteers were concerned would have the effect of discouraging, disorganising, and probably disbanding the force. He appealed to the Prime Minister, who was the last man to press upon the House any scheme which was likely to harm the Volunteer force, to take the advice of those who had given their time and money to serve the country in this regard, and listen to the proposal they made that this scheme should be reconsidered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,100,900, be granted for the said Service:—(*Mr. M'Crae.*)

*Mr. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said he did not share the extreme views held by some hon. Members with regard to the Volunteers. He did not, for instance, share the view of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight that the State should receive from all quarters of the United Kingdom all sorts of service from all kinds of people. He did not think that was at all a practical policy. He did not object to more stringent regulations being made with regard to physique, but he certainly did object to the rigidly military spirit which the right hon. Gentleman seemed to cast over these forces. The right hon. Gentleman did not seem to recognise that they were Volunteers, who of necessity were rather different from regularly organised military forces. The right hon. Gentleman had, as the Committee was well aware, studied military matters very deeply in Continental countries where conscription prevailed, and had perhaps too often adopted the ideas and methods of the German drill-sergeant. In another respect the right hon. Gentleman was too like a Frenchman. He was too fond of logic, and was apt to introduce into a discussion logic which had no application. The right hon. Gentleman, for instance, would come and say: "I come before you in this way, and you ask me to make a reduction in the Regular Army. I cannot do that unless I make a reduction also in the Militia and the Volunteers." That was a logic which did not apply in the least, because, although all these forces had to be considered in relation to each other, he could not see why, if a reduction was made in one, it should be made in all. Each one must be considered not only in relation to other forces, but as to what it was in itself. In the Volunteers we had a force quite different from both the others, and a force which was extremely cheap, and the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, so far from being simple, seemed to throw the whole burden of proof upon its proposer. As he understood, we were going to rely entirely on the Volunteers for home defence, and that being so it was very unwise on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to make all these rather too sweeping statements as to the slight use of the Volunteers in war. They were the only force we had at home to depend on in case of war.

*Mr. ARNOLD FORSTER challenged the hon. Member to quote a single instance of where he had ever made such an observation.

Mr. PEEL said it was difficult to quote a particular instance, but he would refer the right hon. Gentleman to the remarks he had made as to what the Volunteers did in the late war.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER explained that in every case he was quoting from competent authorities. He had made no sweeping statements of any kind.

*Mr. PEEL pointed out that whatever the authority might be on which they were made and supported, the idea given to the public must be that the Volunteer force would be rather a broken reed to lean upon in case of an invasion. The right hon. Gentleman said that money would be required to reorganise them, that there must be transport for them, and it might be that they would have to be divided into brigades and divisions. The Volunteers were organised for home defence, but everybody knew that in time of war there must be in the last resort

this reserve of men to fall back upon. It was quite true that the Volunteers did not go to South Africa as units. But that did not really touch the question, because when these troops were being considered as Reserves the great point was not whether they could be sent out as units, but whether the force would supply men, trained to some extent, to take their place in the fighting line and to make good the great waste of war. That was a totally different thing from sending out men organised as units, and for such a purpose all the arrangements for organising into brigades or divisions were unnecessary. The right hon. Gentleman was not always alive to the very great difference which existed between many of the Volunteers and the ordinary recruits for the Regular Army. The class from which the Regulars were largely drawn required considerable training to bring them up to the standard at which most Volunteers started. The latter already knew the value of obedience and could learn discipline far more rapidly than the others, and if they were called out for two or three months training the enormous improvement that would be effected in a very short time would greatly surprise many of their critics. Rigidity of standard was a thing upon which it would be a mistake to insist. Different standards would suit different parts of the world. A man who would fight extremely well in South Africa or in this country might collapse utterly in the different climate of India. In a force so flexible as the Volunteers what was wanted was rather a variety of standards. The right hon. Gentleman too often forgot what a considerable contribution the Volunteers themselves made in time of peace to the Militia and the Line, and that in the Volunteers there were many old soldiers who had served in the Army and who made excellent Volunteers. It was customary to say that men who had served nine years in the Regulars and three in the Reserve were no longer capable of performing military duties, but many Members of the House were of opinion that men of thirty-one were not altogether worn out.

The general attitude of the right hon. Gentleman gave rise to the suspicion, which might be unfounded, that he really desired to go further than he had yet done in the matter of, he would not say the destruction, but of the reduction of the Volunteers. The tone in which the Secretary of State had spoken of the Volunteers had certainly greatly discouraged that force in many parts of the country. Employers of labour were not extremely ready to take Yeomen or Volunteers into their employ, and it would give them a tremendous argument if they were able to say to intending Volunteers that the force was being reduced, and that they were considered by the authorities as being of very little use. Cases were known in which men had been dismissed for joining the Volunteers, and if these additional discouragements were to be put in their way the War Office would get a much smaller number of men than even they expected. To a force so delicate and flexible as the Volunteers it was impossible to apply the same rigid standard as to the Regular Army. There would be a good Volunteer battalion in one place, and a battalion not so good in another, there could not be the same standard throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman had not yet definitely said whether he intended to abolish *cadres* as well as numbers, if he did, still stronger objections would be raised by many hon. Members. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the question, and not to say that because there was to be a reduction in one part, therefore there must be a reduction in all. Further, in view of the great difficulties the force had had to contend with, the want of sympathy with which it had been treated by the War Office, and also its cheapness, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not proceed with the reduction he had proposed.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): My hon. friend who has just sat down has made a speech in moderate language in which, although the language was moderate, he has levelled at my right hon. friend near me some criticisms to which my right hon. friend certainly is not open. For example, he attributed to my right hon. friend the strange theory that because a reduction was asked for in the Army, therefore a reduction ought to take place in the Volunteers, or because a reduction was asked for in one portion of our military force therefore a reduction ought to take place in another portion of our military force. That is not the view of my right hon. friend, nor, I need hardly say, of the Government. Cost does come in, and must come in, when we discuss Vote A of the Army and the general burden which the military expenditure throws on the taxpayers of the country. But what we have to do is to make that heavy burden—for a heavy burden it undoubtedly is—as useful as we can for the purposes of Imperial defence at home and abroad; and while the argument attributed to my right hon. friend is one for which he has never made himself responsible and is in itself intrinsically absurd, there is a cognate argument which is sound. It is that if and when the country insists upon a reduction it is the duty of the Government and of the Secretary of State for War to see how this reduction can be effected with the least loss to the efficiency of the Army, taken as a whole—the Volunteers, the Militia, the troops serving abroad, the troops serving at home, the troops on whom we have to call for foreign service, and the troops on whom we must rely for the purpose of home defence. I hope the hon. Gentleman will see, therefore, that the position we take up in this matter is not open to the charges that he has levelled against us, and that no such form of reduction as he has attributed to us has ever entered into our minds.

My hon. friend said that the War Office were in the habit of approaching the problem of the Volunteers too much from the standpoint of the Regular Army. I do not at all deny that the natural failing of an officer who has served in the Regular Army would be to criticise the less highly-trained troops in an unfavourable manner, and his tendency would be to undervalue rather than overvalue the services which such imperfectly-trained troops could render to the country. That would be the natural effect of military training upon any officer, whether he belongs to this country or any other country. But when my right hon. friend went on to suggest that the present Secretary of State for War, or his predecessors, or the present Government have been unsympathetic to the Volunteers, I think, if he will cast his mind back over the series of reforms we have made —which we have made at the request of the Volunteers, in order to please them, to render them more efficient as a fighting force and to render the service less onerous to all concerned—I think, if he looks at what has been done, he will acquit us of that unsympathetic and over-critical attitude which he attributed, unjustly as I think, to my right hon. friend and the Government of which he is a member. I can assure him, as far as I am concerned, and as far as the Government are concerned, that we not only sympathise with the Volunteers and regard them as an interesting exhibition of patriotism, but we regard them as an essential part of the fighting force of the country.

I believe there has been a profound misconception of the *rôle* that is to be played by the Volunteers in connection with home defence. I think it was the hon. Member for Oldham who told us a few days ago that, if we really believed half we said about the impossibility of a serious invasion, the Volunteers were a perfectly useless force. I do not mean to go into that argument at the present time, because it is more appropriate to a Vote which is not an Army Vote which will come on shortly, and it cannot be adequately treated in a few sentences; but I can assure the Committee and the hon. Member for Oldham that that is not an accurate representation of the views of the Committee of Defence or of the Government. On the contrary, while we do not believe that in existing conditions a serious invasion of these islands is possible, one of those existing conditions is the Volunteer force; and I certainly should never contemplate with equanimity the abolition of that force from the point of view of national safety. The propositions that the Volunteer force is necessary and that invasion is impossible are not mutually contradictory assertions. They are mutually complementary truths; and it would be a total misconception of the view which I have from time to time expressed on behalf of the Committee of Defence if it were supposed that we considered the Auxiliary Forces of this country a kind of ornamental but perfectly useless adjunct of the Regular Army.

While that would be a profound error, I think there have been indications in the course of this debate that there is another error obtaining far too great currency in this House which belongs to the opposite extreme of military theory. It is the view that all you have got to do is to have enough men who can shoot or know something about the rifle and something about the rudiments of company drill, and that you immediately have all the elements necessary to form an Army at home or abroad. That really is not so. There are Gentlemen who seem to think that if you only multiply your Volunteers enough, you make a corresponding reduction in your Regular organised units. I am not going to develop it now, but I can assure the Committee that to the best of my belief that would be a disastrous policy for this country. I agree with my hon. friend that such training as the Volunteers have, such skill as they may attain in the use of their weapons, such knowledge of drill, and such extended knowledge as many of them possess of the higher branches of military work, would make them of invaluable assistance not as units, but as individuals in the case of a great war, let us say, on the frontier of India. But it means that you must have the necessary units in which the individuals are to be drafted; and it is folly really to suppose that you can cut down without limit, or to any very serious extent, the units on which you will have to rely when, if ever, the hour of trial comes. The question of Indian defence is one which, I hope, the Committee will allow me to postpone till another occasion; but I thought it necessary to enter this *caveat*, as I have seen a tendency, not to overrate the value of the individual, but to fail to realise that the individual without the organisation into which he is to fit is absolutely useless.

There is one other point which I would venture to suggest to my hon. friend and to others who look upon the Volunteers as an adequate and sufficient source from which to draw all the supplies of men we might require to fill up the *cadres* in the case of a great foreign war. That they will be valuable for that purpose I do not doubt for a moment; but they would be but inadequate to supply what I believe is the greatest need of the British Army at this moment—that is, officers. One great difficulty in trying to diminish the number of organised units in your Army is that by so doing, apart from diminishing the number of men, you do what is, or may be, much more dangerous — you diminish the number of available officers. That is a point that has to be borne in mind.

There is one other observation I desire to make. My hon. friend says, and I think with great measure of truth, that you must be careful not to treat the Volunteers in too Procrustean a fashion that you must not be too arbitrary and symmetrical in all the provisions you make with regard to them; that you should give as great elasticity to your system as possible; that you should meet, as far as possible, the wants of the different districts and the needs of the different regiments. But when he deduces from that general proposition, with which I am in perfect agreement, the conclusion that you ought really never to lay down regulations as to the magnitude of the force, may I remind him that the limits of establishment which have been imposed on the Yeomanry have really worked exceedingly well—at all events, that under them the Yeomanry is more efficient, that it has reached its full standard, and it is a standing proof of what can be done by a Volunteer force; I do not think there is any reason to believe that a procedure which has succeeded, or, at all events, has not failed, when applied to the mounted branch of the Volunteer service must necessarily be defective if applied to the infantry.

I really think with regard to the Volunteers the House will ultimately have to choose between two policies. I think they will find that if we keep up the requisite number of the Regular units, and I believe it to be absolutely necessary for the force that we require to send abroad, the cost of the Army amounts to such a figure that they cannot allow the expense on the Volunteer force to be absolutely unlimited in every direction. If it is to be limited in one direction or another the House will have to choose in which direction they wish to limit it. But if you are going to say both that the strength of the Volunteers shall be unlimited and that the training shall be on the higher standard with all the cost which the higher standard involves, then I am afraid you will find that the cost of the Volunteers reaches a point which, with all the other necessary obligations you are under with regard to the Army, will put too great a burden on the back of the taxpayer. I think it is perfectly arguable that we should not aim, at a great cost, at increasing the efficiency of the Volunteers as a field army, but that we should insist upon certain qualifications, a certain knowledge of drill, and a certain excellence of shooting, and, saving money in that way, you should allow the numbers to run up to a much higher figure than the 180,000 or 200,000 at which it has been suggested they should be fixed. But I do not believe you can fairly have both policies unless you are prepared to see your Estimates run to an impossible figure; and I should very much desire that those who know most about the Volunteers and those who are most interested in them should make up their minds in which direction they desire to see the limitation take place. There is much to be said for the numerical limitation; but I believe that the trend of opinion among the Volunteers themselves is rather in the other direction—that they wish to have this training in camp, this training as part of a field army, this training in combination with other forces, all of which costs a great deal of money, excellent as it it.

I am fully in accord with those who think that the Volunteers do a great deal to encourage a military spirit and to provide half-manufactured goods which may be in time of stress turned into completely manufactured goods for warlike purposes. But I do warn the House that we must not discuss this question in isolation. We cannot consider the Volunteer question apart from the question of Army expenditure as a whole. If the House thinks that I am right, that my right hon. friend and the Committee of Defence are right, in holding the view that we cannot greatly diminish the units of our Regular Army, and that if we keep up those units the margin on which we can work in the reduction of expense is necessarily a limited margin, then they must feel, as I feel, that we cannot say of the Volunteers, and the Volunteers alone, " Here we will entertain no question of pounds, shillings, and pence; they are a cheap force, a patriotic and a voluntary force; let us not be so mean-spirited as to count pounds, shillings, and pence when we have to deal with them." That is not—I hope the Committee will believe me—the proper way to look at the question, and I am sure it is not the way they will deal with it when they come to consider the subject in all its bearings. Therefore I would say that the view I have arrived at is that the theory of my hon. friend who has just sat down is one with which I largely agree, but it is a variation of a much wider theory with which I do not agree—namely, that we can carry on the business of this Empire in security with a very small Regular Army, trusting as a supplement to that Regular Army merely to the miscellaneous efforts of an unlimited body of Volunteers, for which we have not provided the proper organisations in which they could work supposing we were to ask the individuals of which the Volunteer regiments are composed to come forward and in some great hour of national stress and danger to throw in their lot with the Regular Army fighting on some distant frontier. That is the general view which I would venture to lay before the Committee in connection with the Volunteers; and I hope, at all events, that with regard to what I have said the charge will not be levelled against me that I have treated the Volunteers in an unsympathetic spirit.

*Mr. McCRAE: You propose to reduce the Vote by one-fourth.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Vote is the same as last year.

*Mr. McCRAE: The Vote is the same, but the right hon. Gentleman pointed out that that referred to the grant of last year, and he proposes now to reduce the Volunteers to such an extent that the expenditure would be reduced by £300,000, according to his own statement.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, it is not the expenditure which is reduced, it is the privileges which are increased. If you are to keep the expenditure what it was, and increase the privileges, that carries with it a diminution of numbers, no doubt.

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham) said the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question which was the one essential point now before the Committee. He made a great number of observations of a very friendly character with regard to the Volunteers, but he did not tell the Committee whether it was the intention of the Government to reduce the force by 15,000, and to continue that policy until it was reduced to 200,000. That, after all, was the object with which this debate had been raised. The Volunteers had had a great deal of abuse of late, and also a great deal of perfunctory statement about them. What the Committee wanted to know was whether the numbers were to be arbitrarily reduced as the regular policy of His Majesty's Government until they stood at a figure not exceeding 200,000. That was a Question which could be answered very simply and very shortly, and, after all, it was the one question on which they did feel very great interest. Of course the Prime Minister had a great many other things to attend to, but if he had been present during the whole of the last three days debates he would not have been so ready to excuse the Secretary of State for War for having discouraged the Volunteers. What had been the feature of these debates? The right hon. Gentleman had poured out buckets of cold water on the Volunteers, and described all the shortcomings he could possibly collect under which they lay. He pointed out that they were medically unfit, and that whole battalions were inefficient; he had infuriated the Volunteer officers in this House by repeated attacks made upon the force; and he had spoken contemptuously of the Auxiliary Forces. The Committee had listened to a perfect stream of deprecation, of criticism, and even of abuse of the Volunteers from the Secretary of State for War. It was all very well to say that the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to discourage them; he did discourage them. That was not a thing to be argued about, All over the country they were very much discouraged and incensed, and their representatives in this House, most of whom were among the loyal supporters of the Government, had been forced, quite against their will, and against their instincts, to get up in their places and make reasonable, earnest, and weighty complaints. The Prime Minister got up in his place and said, "We do not desire to discourage the Volunteers."

> "'I weep for you,' the walrus said,
> 'I deeply sympathise.'"

Meanwhile the Volunteers were to be steadily reduced until they did not exceed 200,000 men. Of course, nobody would say for a moment that the expenditure on the Volunteers should be unlimited. That was a proposition which this House ought not for a moment to entertain, but they did submit for the attention of the Prime Minister the proposition that, when it was considered how extraordinarily cheap an efficient Volunteer was, both from the material and moral point of view, it was a great pity to refuse the services of men who would come forward and make themselves efficient. If it were true that there were a great number of useless men in the Volunteers, the War Office were entitled to raise the standard and to insist upon the standard being strictly observed. In that way, no doubt, some sort of reduction might be effected. Of course it was easy for the War Office to draw the standard with a malevolent purpose. It was quite easy to draw conditions with which the Volunteers could not conform, but if they were considerately drawn there would be no great opposition on the part of the Volunteer officers to the strict enforcement of medical fitness, rifle-shooting, and the like. But to fix an arbitrary number, and that number greatly less than the establishment, must discourage the whole force. It not only left out bad men, but it prevented good men from coming forward and joining the force. It greatly impaired the efficiency of the force. He saw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in his place. He was not going to say anything controversial. The right hon. Gentleman made a speech four years ago on the Boer War in which he said that the great lesson of the war was the enormous power which a citizen force could develop in defence of their own country, and he added that he thought this on the whole made for the peace of the world. The hon. Member most earnestly hoped under those circumstances that they, who had supported, as far as they possibly could, the cause of the Volunteers, were not going to be accused of Jingoism and Militarism, because they would rather see this country in a greater measure dependent on voluntary forces than on the professional forces who had to be kept in barracks and devote their whole life to their profession. He rose to ask the Prime Minister this particular Question: What is the policy of the Government with regard to the Volunteers? Let them put aside, on the one hand, all the abuse the Secretary of State for War had levelled at them, and let them put aside, on the other hand, all the sympathy and kind words which the Prime Minister had spoken about them. The question was not what they were going to say, but what they were going to do. If the Government were going to reduce the Volunteers to 200,000 men, he earnestly hoped the Committee would express their disapproval.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member asked what is the policy of the Government with regard to the Volunteers, and I will endeavour to give an answer. I must, however, first protest against the accusations that the hon. Member thought fit to bring against me. I recognise none of the statements he has made as to my attitude towards the Volunteers. I have served many years in the Volunteers, I know the Volunteers well, and I think upon no occasion have I failed to express my appreciation of the merits of the Volunteers and the services they have rendered. It is perfectly true, and I make no apology for it, that when I was told that Volunteers were available for a certain purpose I was compelled, in the discharge of the duties of my office, to examine how far that proposition was correct; and in doing so I did quote statements in regard to the Volunteers, not made by the War Office, but by Volunteers officers, which were strictly relevant to the question, and which it was necessary that the House should be in possession of in order that they might understand whether we could or could not rely on the Volunteers in time of foreign war, and if we could not, to what extent. Apart from that, I have said no word either in this House or out of it, which in any way could be construed, directly or indirectly, as a reflection on the Volunteers. So far from such an idea being present to my mind, my efforts have been directed, during the time I have been in my present office, solely to promote the interests of Volunteers in the way I believe they themselves would desire to see them promoted.

Let me go back to what the Prime Minister said in regard to the question of cost. I am in the recollection of the House when I say that if there has been one subject more than another insisted on in our debates—it has been that there must not be an increase of expenditure. If I am allowed to assume that, I deduce from it that I am not taking a wrong course in suggesting to the House that we should follow the policy we now propose in regard to the Volunteers. We are proposing to reduce the strength of the Volunteers by 15,000 men.

*Mr. McCRAE: The establishment by 114,000 men.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Gentleman is quite correct, but that number is illusory. It is an entire mistake to suggest that a reduction of that kind, even apart from anything else at all, is necessarily detrimental to the force. So far from that being the case, we have done precisely the same thing with regard to the Imperial Yeomanry. The War Office was blamed for reducing the establishment of Yeomanry, we were blamed for altering the numbers of the Yeomanry regiments. As we acted in that instance we are acting now. And what has been the result? The Yeomanry are within 500 of that reduced standard. The regiments are of a uniform size. The condition of the force leaves nothing to be desired. They are in the happy position that numbers of men are being refused for the Yeomanry instead of being invited to come in. Hon. Gentlemen laugh, but I think that is a very happy condition of affairs; for the officers, instead of accepting every one who presents himself, are able to select the men best qualified to make their regiments efficient.

The question now is—Are the Volunteers to be an immense, unlimited force with little training and imperfect equipment, or are they to be a smaller, compact force, well-drilled and well-equipped? I may be wrong, but my judgment is that the prevailing feeling in the force is in favour of the latter alternative. Supposing we accept that position, what are the steps it entails upon us to take? I have endeavoured to ascertain from the Volunteers themselves what are the things they consider necessary to be done in order that they may be made efficient, and that the burdens which hamper them may be lifted from their shoulders. We have been told that arrangements should be made for allowing a larger number of men to go into camp for a fortnight. Last year 21,000 men were allowed to go into camp for a fortnight, and they received 5s. a day. We desire to make it possible for a larger number of men to go into camp. Last year a total of 175,000 men went into camp, of whom all but 21,000 went in for one week only. If all those men were allowed to go into camp for a fortnight, the Estimates would have to be increased by nearly £600,000 for camp allowances alone. We have been told that the officers should receive a larger payment when in camp on account of expenses. They receive 11s. 6d., and it has been represented to us that it ought to be increased to 14s. We desire to give the officers that amount. We have been told that a very heavy expense falls upon mounted officers for saddlery and horse furniture and that a grant-in-aid of £5 would be reasonable. We desire to give that grant-in-aid. We have been told that it is most important that non-commissioned officers should receive proper instruction. We desire to establish classes for the instruction of non-commissioned officers. We have been told that there should be some addition to Volunteer transport. We desire to make that addition.

MR. CHURCHILL: Is the transport for this country or for foreign service?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Of course, the Volunteer force is, by law organised for service in this country.

MR. CHURCHILL: Then do I understand that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to provide transport for the Volunteers in this country, although he believes that in no circumstances could this country be invaded? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Order."]

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is transport for service in this country undoubtedly. We have been told that it is desirable that there should be, at any rate, the embryo of a higher organisation for the Volunteers. We desire that there should be some divisional organisation for the Volunteers. We have been told that it is a great strain on the men to have to pay travelling expenses. We desire to relieve them of that expense. We have been told that more ammunition ought to be allowed the Volunteer artillery for practice. We desire to place more ammunition at the disposal of the Volunteer artillery.

When we came to total up all these various items of additional expenditure we found that they represented a very large amount. I adhere to the opinion that we cannot ask Parliament now for the large sum which would enable us to give these additional advantages to the Volunteers. Then comes the question whether we shall have a large number of men without these advantages, or a slightly smaller number of men to whom we could give these advantages. To supply 245,000 men with all the additional advantages which I have set out would be a very costly matter indeed. Do the Committee really think it would be a practical step for the Government to ask for an additional grant of over £500,000 for capitation allowances alone? I do not think I should have got it had I asked for it. On the contrary, I should have been blamed for making such a large addition to the Army Estimates. It is said that it is a great discouragement to the Volunteers to ask them to submit to a reduction of their numbers. If I thought so, I would not have asked for the reduction. We ask for a reduction of 15,000 on the strength. I maintain that, without injuring the Volunteer force in the least, we can consolidate and reduce its numbers. I know the Volunteer point of view very well, and a very important point of view it is. It is this—that, if you merely reduce numbers and do not give any corresponding advantages, you will absolutely destroy many of the Volunteer battalions. But we want to obviate anything of the kind. I have gone through the figures representative of every battalion in every part of the United Kingdom, and I say that no battalions will suffer at all, but, on the contrary, will gain by our proposals. That being so, I cannot see that I am guilty of any great dereliction of duty in trying to impress this view upon the House.

We have made no change in regard to the Volunteers this year. We might have made some change if I had had a Fortunatus purse at my disposal. I should like to have been able to provide for all expenses. But we do expend £15,000 more for travelling expenses, and we give an additional £5,000 worth of ammunition to the artillery for practice. Changes of this kind must be made very slowly. I quite admit that the full reduction does not take place this year. Two alternatives are before Parliament—either to vote more money to the Volunteers, which I do not think it is at all likely to do, or to withhold the advantages for the provision of which there is no money. I believe that this very small reduction in numbers can and will be made without any sort of pressure upon the Volunteers at all. I believe it will be made with the approval of the Volunteer officers and the officers commanding in the districts, and in a way that it will be a pure gain to the Volunteers.

*MR. McCRAE: Do you still propose to reduce the Volunteer grant by £300,000?

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There is practically no saving at all on a reduction to 200,000 men.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Pure waste.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The whole of the money is to be spent in providing these advantages for the Volunteers.

I think that if we get the officers' question settled, as it ought to be settled, the Volunteer force will be not only improved, but doubled in value. The whole intention of Parliament is to make the position of the Volunteer officer easier—the commanding officer, in the first place, on whom the chief burden lies; and the junior officer also must receive great relief. I believe if we make the regiments compact and effective there will be practically no difficulty in getting officers at all. It is not correct to suggest that our proposals have had a deleterious effect upon the Volunteer force. There has been a steady decline in officers of late years, I know, and it is attributable to many causes, but there has been no special decline of late. There has been no decline at all in the number of the men. I want to arrest the falling off in the number of officers, and I believe that the proposals which I have suggested will arrest that more effectually than any other way. I do hope after this explanation that hon. Members will acquit me of any want of sympathy with the Volunteer force and also credit me with an earnest desire to improve the quality of that force. If hon. Members will guarantee that I shall have £500,000 additional a year which would enable me to give the camp allowances desired, and if they will guarantee me all the money required for other necessaries then I am bound to say the question will have to be reopened. That is the position. We are doing the very best we possibly can with the means at our disposal, and we are filling in, line by line, the recommendations which we have received from the Volunteers themselves as to the objects which they most desire and which they most greatly need.

*Mr. C. R SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid.) said he could not understand what the proposal of the Minister for War was. He objected to using phrases which might cause hon. Members to consider him egotistical, but he thought he must express his regret, first, that he could not understand what the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down meant by his proposal, and secondly, that he could not agree with all that the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister bespattered the Volunteer officers of that House with ointment, but he confessed that his wounds had not been healed and he still felt sore and disappointed with regard to the action which the Secretary for War had taken in regard to the Volunteers and in supplying their requirements. He was perfectly certain that the Secretary of State for War was in days gone by happier than he was at that moment. Then the right hon. Gentleman was thoroughly in favour of helping the Volunteers and understood their power. It was owing to the right hon. Gentleman's unfortunate association with fossils in the War Office that he had changed his opinions and had come down to the House and rather hurt his feelings and the feelings of others. [Laughter.] Hon. Members laughed but he did not know that it was very pleasant to be told even by a gallant soldier that one belonged to a force the majority of which were crippled idiots or diseased.

The right hon. Gentleman had asked them certain Questions which he did not think they were in the least called upon to answer, but he did want to know how he was going to reduce the number of Volunteers. If the right hon. Gentleman were in command of a county company, as he was, he would be sick and disheartened if in recruiting the villages he was told "what is the use of joining the Volunteers when the Minister for War is going to reduce the force." The right hon. Gentleman had said that he thought it absolutely necessary to reduce the force, but he had given them one hope in saying that it was not to be reduced this year. He took particular note of that phrase because he hoped that if it was not to be reduced this year it would not be reduced at all. He asked that the Volunteer force should not be looked upon as an opera comique business but should be looked upon as taking part, and a serious part, in the defences of the country, and should be dealt with in accordance with its requirements and its needs. He thought it would be inimical to the force if a cut-and-dried rule were made that both county and town battalions should be similar in all respects. They should be similar in efficiency but not in all other respects. He should deeply regret if they were made so. He could not get from his mind the feeling that the right hon. Gentleman and those who worked with him at the War Office did not understand that Volunteers were Volunteers and could not be made into Regulars by a stroke of the pen. They were, however, an essential part of the forces of this country. He asked the right hon. Gentleman once more to keep himself free from that unfortunate position which his predecessor once took up, that the Volunteers and their supporters throughout the country were a negligible quantity. He would invite him to say generally how he proposed to reduce the Volunteers, and might he say that when the right hon. Gentleman had done that he hoped he would not have the opportunity of reducing the force.

COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton): The right hon. Gentleman on a former occasion was not so sympathetic as he has been to-night; and I and those who feel strongly about the Volunteer force, are very glad indeed that the Prime Minister has said what he has. Of course, it must be remembered that the first time we heard of the scheme of the Secretary of State for War we were told that 60,000 were to come off the Volunteer force, that it was to be reduced to 180,000. Well, we have to make the best we can of the circumstances in which we are, and I do think that this evening there has been some yielding to the pressure that has been brought to bear for many months. I should like to emphasise what has been said. It appears that the Prime Minister is sympathetic, and I think the Secretary of State for War is also sympathetic; but it is not clear how these reductions are going to be made. I think he did say on a former occasion, however, that he was going to proceed in consultation with the commanding officers of the Volunteer units.

I want to point out that the two Reserves — the Regular Reserve and the Militia Reserve — are very, very low, at least, in my opinion they are very, very low. The actual numbers of the Regular Reserves, according to the latest Return, is 77,000, and the Militia Reserve was 7,000. In passing, I ask what about the Militia Reserve. I believe the late Secretary of State for War, the present Secretary for India, did say that he hoped to get a very large Reserve for the Militia, and he hoped to raise the total force of the Militia to 150,000. Now, Sir, that question of the Militia Reserve, it seems to me, is well worth the attention of my right hon. friend, and for this reason. Supposing we have a great war, and supposing that we take the Secretary of State for War at his word—that he has to rely upon the Regular Army and the Militia—where does he get his Reserve from for times of war? If we refer back to the South African War, we shall there have a standard that, at any rate, he has to come up to if a war of a similar character is waged between this country and some hostile power. In that war there were 448,000 troops employed. The Regular troops were 256,000, and the Auxiliary troops that went to South Africa were 192,000. Very well. Where is the Reserve, where is the reinforcement to come from? I say he would have to go again to exactly the same resources he had to draw upon before. It does appear to me that, until his scheme as regards the long-service Army and the short-service Army has had time to develop, he ought not to reduce any of the Auxiliary Forces. The Volunteer force only costs £1,200,000 out of nearly £30,000,000 of the whole cost, and, practically speaking, it is a very small figure, and it is hardly worth troubling about. Well, now, it seems to me he will not get very many Reserve men out of the nine years service. For the present, the enlisting and recruiting of the short-service men is discontinued; it is in abeyance, and it will be in abeyance for some considerable time. As far as I can see, the Reserve will grow very, very slowly.

Well, now, about the Volunteers. How is he going to reduce them? A great deal of what he said showed that he has a certain amount of sympathy, but there is no doubt about it that he did say he was going to reduce them something like 60,000. Now this year he is going to reduce them 15,000. Well, now, as far as the medical tests go and as far as efficiency tests go I do not think the Volunteers object at all, and I would suggest to my right hon. friend that no Volunteer unit should be interfered with except as regards efficiency and as regards bringing it up to some reasonable physical standard. If my right hon. friend restricts his reduction to that I do not think he will find that there will be very much reduction, because I admit that, of course, as you improve the force in efficiency and their physical standard, making the standard of health better, you will there again improve the force and you will attract recruits, and I believe also you will attract officers. But I notice he is going to reduce the grant to 15s in regard to those men who do not attend camp, and by that means he is going to save some money, but I suggest to him that he should increase the grant to those who do go into camp, because the cost of the battalion is heavy, for they have the expense of their band and other things, and the grant does not cover everything; it has to come out of subscriptions. Therefore, I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that in that particular he should raise the grant to men who attend camp by the money that he saves by taking it off the men who do not go into camp.

I think, if my right hon. friend had taken up the position he has taken to-night, there would not have been as much opposition and agitation. There is no doubt about it. Volunteers have to a great extent had careless, hasty, and unkind things said about them, and they feel it deeply; but if in consultation with the commanding officers the efficiency of the force is raised in every respect, then I do not think there is very much to complain of, But what is the reduction. It is a mere nothing. What I would suggest is that this is a tentative year, that the Secretary of State for War should not make up his mind, but that he should see, during the next year, what effect the gradual improving of efficiency and the gradual improving of the standard of the men who are enlisted will have not only upon reducing the numbers of the force, but upon the general position of the force in every way.

Finally, I will point shortly to the history of the Volunteer force from the beginning. It has existed for nearly forty-four years, and every year it has been better than it was the year before; and this sudden cold frost that has come on the force through no fault of its own has done harm. But if the War Office and the Prime Minister look with sympathy upon the force, and if they act with the Volunteers themselves during the next year, and if the reductions of the force are not made by units, or in a drastic way, but are simply made by weeding out the totally unfit and those who do not come up to a sufficient physical standard, then I believe we shall not only improve the force in efficiency and in health, but that we shall probably keep up the numbers as well. If we find that during the next twelve months the numbers keep up, then I should say let the force continue to grow slowly as it has done in the past. The force rose in the Boer War to 345,000. It has fallen to 245,000, a decrease of 100,000. I would say let the natural rise and fall go on, subject to the treatment I have suggested—efficiency of men, efficiency in officers and non-commissioned officers, a full standard of health, and action in thorough sympathy with the Volunteer officers during the next twelve months—and let us see whether the rather unkind things that have been said in various quarters, are justified, and whether the drastic condemnation in this House has not gone too far. I trust my right hon. friend will be able to continue to enlarge his ideas so as to help the Volunteers in every way.

*MR. LLEWELLYN (Somersetshire, N.) said a great deal had been heard about the cheapness of the Volunteers.

His opinion was that a good Volunteer was certainly very cheap, but that a useless Volunteer was exceedingly dear. He asked hon. Members opposite, some of whom commanded Volunteer battalions, which they would prefer to command—a battalion of 500 men of good physique, thoroughly trained and well disciplined, or a battalion of 750 men such as were to be found in many battalions to-day. That really was the question that had to be answered in the division to-night. One of the main causes of a number of inefficient men being retained was the system upon which the grant was given. The capitation grant was a great mistake. The grant should be given to units, and the commanding officer held responsible for the expenditure of the money. At present commanding officers were frequently put in a position of great difficulty in the matter of getting rid of undesirable men. It was very important that they should be relieved of all anxieties with regard to money payments. Two Members of the House who were commanding officers, in giving evidence before the Royal Commission, stated, one that when he took over the command of his battalion he was responsible for £4,000, and the other that his camp cost him in one year £250 out of his own pocket. That was not a satisfactory state of affairs. These facts gave greater point to his remarks about the capitation grant, as there was a great temptation to officers responsible for the finances of the company or battalion when they were called upon to decide whether or not a man should be kept on the roll. The hon. and gallant Member for South Sheffield had waxed very indignant because, as he said, the Secretary of State intended to get rid of such men as did service in South Africa. Nobody had ever made such a suggestion. The men who went to South Africa were splendid fellows; they were not the men that were to be got rid of. If every battalion consisted of men able to pass the examination those men did and possessing similar qualifications, no War Minister in his senses would ever suggest the reduction of a single man.

One mistake had been to allow the multiplication of branches of Volunteers in the same place. For instance, often in a comparatively small town there were Rifle Volunteers, Engineer Volunteers, Artillery Volunteers, and Submarine Volunteers. It was perfectly impossible under such circumstances for corps to flourish either numerically or financially, or to secure a supply of proper officers. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give his attention to that matter. So much had been said as to inability to understand the Secretary of State's scheme that he hardly liked to say that he understood it perfectly so far as the Volunteers were concerned. The right hon. Gentleman's object was to reduce the number of Volunteers by the physically inefficient and insufficiently trained, and to apply the money so saved to perfecting those who remained. Unless hon. Members opposite were prepared to answer the question he had put as to which kind of battalion they would prefer to command they had no right to throw any doubt on the proposition of the Secretary of State for War.

Mr. FREEMAN-THOMAS (Hastings) said he wished to address his remarks to the question of the Militia and the Volunteers. He entirely disagreed with the right hon. Gentleman in regard to his proposals with reference to those forces. The right hon. Gentleman said that although he proposed to reduce the number of the Volunteers his object was to render more efficient the remaining number. It was notorious that for a considerable number of years the War Office had very much neglected and had not given encouragement to the Volunteer force in this country. His own belief was that the Volunteer force should be increased rather than reduced, and be believed that if sufficient encouragement was given by the War Office they would be able to get a very fine and effective force for the defence of this country. He did not think in the past that the Militia had ever received any satisfactory encouragement at the hands of the War Office. He had himself served in a garrison artillery regiment something like fifteen years, and he could say that during the whole of that time neither the men nor the officers of the regiment which he belonged to had ever seen the outside of a breech-loading gun, but had been obliged to do the whole of their drill and practise at old 64 prs. and 9-in muzzle-loading guns. He left that regiment in despair because he thought he might do more useful service in the Yeomanry force. He thought this showed clearly that the Militia had not been encouraged. As far as he could understand the Secretary of State for War, it seemed that he wished to level up the Militia, give them more training, and attach to them a certain number of Regular officers. He hoped he might be able to get the men to do the extra amount of training. With regard to the second part of the scheme for the Militia, namely, that any new recruit whenever he joined should be bound to sign on for compulsory foreign service, he had very grave doubts as to its success. Although he knew that the right hon. Gentleman had most excellent and high authority for believing that this arrangement would be a satisfactory thing with regard to the Militia, it seemed to him that he was endangering very seriously the recruiting possibilities by undertaking this scheme. He could not help feeling that there was a rooted objection in the mind of any recruit who joined a Volunteer force to sign on for any compulsory foreign service. He had no doubt that in an emergency of any sort they would volunteer to undertake any obligation for their country, but he did not think it was a wise thing to insist upon this compulsory foreign service or the Militia.

As far as he could understand it the whole scheme of the Secretary of State for War seemed to be of a temporising and temporary character. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman advocated the extreme blue-water theory. Notwithstanding what the Prime Minister said, he could not see that, if the extreme blue-water theory was carried out to its logical conclusion, there should be any need for any Militia or Volunteers in this country. The right hon. Gentleman was of opinion that public opinion was not quite ready for his particular scheme, and he brought this in rather as an interim report, and hoped to do rather more in the future with the Volunteer forces. Personally he was no believer in the extreme blue-water theory or the extremes of exaggeration as to the danger upon the North-West frontier of India. He was, however, very anxious for Army reform, and he was convinced that the views of the right hon. Gentleman both with regard to the Volunteers and the Militia were unsound and detrimental to both those branches of the service. For those reasons he should certainly vote for the reduction.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL **PRYCE-JONES** (Montgomery Boroughs) thought they should have some guarantee that if the numbers in the Volunteer battalions were reduced they would get greater efficiency. [Cries of "Speak up."] He quite agreed with what the Secretary of State for War had said as to reducing the number of the Volunteers and making them more efficient. If those promises were carried out, and bigger allowances were given to both officers and men and other facilities were offered them, he was perfectly sure that the Volunteer forces throughout the country would not grumble in the least. But the right hon. Gentleman had never given them that assurance before, and he was pleased that on this occasion he had pledged himself in that direction. Another hon. friend of his had referred to the difference between corps in country districts and in big towns. It often happened that country corps were much more difficult to keep up than town corps. They only wanted differential treatment where it was more expensive to maintain Volunteer corps.

MR. **CHARLES HOBHOUSE** (Bristol, E.) said the Secretary of State for War stated that afternoon that, after consulting a great number of Volunteer and Imperial Yeomanry officers, he had come to the conclusion that it was absolutely necessary to reduce the Volunteer force, as he had had to reduce the Imperial Yeomanry. Then he went on to use these extraordinary words—

> "It is a happy condition that men should be refused for an Imperial Yeomanry regiment."

That, he thought, was the most extraordinary statement ever made in the House of Commons by a Secretary of State for War. It was not desirable that a Yeomanry regiment should be in a position to refuse men. It was not a good thing for the country that men who were willing to come forward with sufficient physique to make good soldiers should be turned away by regimental authorities because the Minister in charge of the War Office for the time being thought there were too many Volunteer soldiers in the country. The Prime Minister in connection with this point made an almost equally extraordinary statement when he said that they had in the Army increased efficiency in numbers and a diminution in the establishment. The hon. Member supposed the Secretary of State for War intended to apply the same theory to the Volunteers. Having commanded a Volunteer regiment for some years, it was quite clear to him that a diminution of the establishment would not tend to increase the numbers or the efficiency. He was in the happy position of having had an excess of numbers over the establishment, and that had enabled him to turn away men under the standard who did not make desirable recruits. There were, however, commanding officers who would have taken on these men because they had to recruit up to a certain number. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that if he had decreased the establishment by a certain percentage, say from 345,000 to 300,000, he would have got rid of the excessive establishment while encouraging officers to get more men. The Volunteer officers could have insisted upon a greater test of efficiency and a greater standard of physique without the putting of difficulty in the way by the War Office.

The Secretary of State for War gave three alternatives—to refuse numbers, to refuse facilities, or to raise the Estimates. If these were the only three alternatives, he would have preferred to vote for an increase of the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that he wished to act in accordance with the views of the majority of the Volunteer officers. He had from time to time consulted them, and he had always modified the programme. If he would give a further consultation he would still further modify the programme, and would not come back to the House with proposals which discouraged men from enlisting in a valuable portion of the home forces. The hon. Member and a great number of others thought the Estimates for the Volunteer force ought to be increased in order to provide a sufficient home force to ensure the security of these islands.

*COLONEL WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.) said that as an old Volunteer he wished to thank the Secretary of State for what he said that afternoon with regard to the Volunteer force. He was not one of those thin-skinned Volunteers who took offence at everything. He had felt disappointment at some things which had been said, but the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that day had in a considerable measure taken away that feeling. If they had to choose between going on as they were or getting more advantages with reduced numbers, he should prefer the latter as offered by the Secretary of State for War. He believed the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman would have the effect of giving higher efficiency with the reduced numbers. He thought that if they submitted to the reduction this year, and if they got next year from the War Office the further advantages promised by the right hon. Gentleman, they should be satisfied. As to the large sums of money that were to be given to the Volunteers, he rather thought that the time for receiving them was much farther off than hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to imagine. In the meantime, as a bird in the hand was better than a bird in the bush, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War for what he had already done; and he only hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give them a few more 15s. men if they could recruit them.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes 218. (Division List No. 103.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn

Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C(SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie,
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (MerthyrTydvil
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Higham, John Sharpe
Hobhouse, C.E.H.(Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry

Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt. Hn. John(Montrose
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William

Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R.Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn. C R(Northants
Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas,J A(Glamorgan,Gower
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, J. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters(NDorset
Wilson, Fred W(Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. McCrae and Captain Freeman-Thomas.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus HenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. HughO
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord

Balfour, Rt.Hn.A.J (Manch'r.)
Balfour, RtHnGeraldW(Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles

Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow
Campbell, J.H M(Dublin Univ.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C W(Derbyshire

Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.(Birm.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T.R(TowerHamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, SirFredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hn. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. HnSirJ(Manc'r)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S.W
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin&Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.
Gordon, Maj.Evans-(T'rH'm'ts
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulng, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D(Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour)
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'h
Lawson, Hn. H.L.W.(Mile End
Lawson, John Grant(YorksN.R
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hn. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter(Bristol,S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale
Lucas, ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hn. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn SirH.E(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hn.J.ScottW (Hants
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield
Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hn. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S(Limehouse
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H.C.(North'mbTyneside
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord(Lancs)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col A.CE(Taunton)
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley(York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H(Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

ACCRINGTON CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

ACCRINGTON DISTRICT GAS AND WATER BOARD BILL (BY ORDER).

CLAY CROSS RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) BILL (BY ORDER).

Read the third time, and passed.

SOUTH SUBURBAN GAS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

WREXHAM GAS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read the third time, and passed.

ACTON SEWAGE BILL (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

ILFRACOMBE HARBOUR AND IMPROVEMENT BILL (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

NOTTINGHAM AND RETFORD RAILWAY BILL (BY ORDER).

[Not amended], considered; to be read the third time.

OTLEY IMPROVEMENT BILL (CHANGED FROM "OTLEY GAS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL") (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

SEAHAM GAS BILL (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

SUNDERLAND AND SOUTH SHIELDS WATER BILL (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

COTTON SUPPLY (BRITISH DEPENDENCIES).

*SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) said he need make no apology for bringing a subject of such great interest as that of the cotton-growing industry before the House. The cotton trade was one of the largest industries in the country. In fact, the number of persons employed in and dependent upon it was so great that it ranked next to the great industry of agriculture in importance. The Resolution he proposed to move was not framed in any hostile spirit to any section of the community or any one concerned in the industry of cotton growing in any part of the world. He had no reason, therefore to apprehend any hostile action being taken towards his Motion. To those connected with Lancashire this subject must be of very vast importance, having regard to the fact that during the past three years this great industry had suffered from very great depression, the effect of which had been seen not only in the distress directly caused among the operatives engaged in it, but amongst all classes and all parts of the country concerned in its prosperity. He had had a very lively impression recently of the effects of the depression, and the consequent deficiency in receipts of the operatives engaged in this industry. There were towns in Lancashire which depended for their prosperity upon the power of the operatives every now and then to take a few days of well earned rest from their labour, and only recently he had been informed by a justice of the peace for the county that in the last few weeks forty-seven distress warrants had been issued in a town frequented for pleasure by operatives of the cotton trade.

It was hardly necessary to emphasise the importance of this industry, because only last year it formed the subject of a few words in His Majesty's most Gracious Speech at the opening of Parliament. Those words were—

> "The insufficiency of the supply of the raw material upon which the great cotton industry of this country depends has inspired Me with deep concern. I trust that the efforts which are being made in various parts of My Empire to increase the area under cultivation may be attended with a large measure of success."

He believed those efforts had been successful. In various parts of the Empire they had every reason to hope that gradually a cotton growing industry would be developed which would satisfy and make good the deficiency which from time to time arose. The depression of the last years had been caused by a succession of crops very much below the average. That of course affected prices; prices rose, and those who had to buy cotton for the purpose of carrying on their manufactures had to spend the same amount of money as in previous years for only about three quarters of the amount of cotton they then bought. This produced a considerable rise also in the cost of the manufactured article. Of a necessity the direct result of this was that the demand for so high a priced article was much restricted. They could congratulate themselves that, for the moment, the depression had passed away, and prosperity was smiling on those engaged in the industry. Nothing was more gratifying than to go through the cotton manufacturing districts and see the cheerful and pleasant appearance of all engaged in this trade, for which the conditions this year were very favourable.

It might be said, "If we have a return to prosperity, why may we not hope that that prosperity will be continuous. Why should we trouble further about it?" That was amost short-sighted view to take, as would be seen if a closer and more comprehensive view was taken. The cotton supply coming from America this year would amount to 12,500,000 bales. Seventy per cent. of our raw material came from the American cotton growing districts, and while the abundant supply of the present year came from the exceptionally good American crop, it was from that source that the depression had mainly arisen. Looking closely at the facts, we found that not only had the deficiency of previous years been of very serious moment, but that a deficiency must always arise in future years with even an average crop, because the average supply a few years hence would be short of our requirements. An examination of the figures of the past ten years demonstrated that we should require to obtain from other sources in the future cotton to be used in the mills in increasing quantities each year. The total American cotton crop for 1895–96 was 7,157,000 bales. Of that Great Britain took 2,302,000 bales; the Continent 2,262,000 bales, and America 2,593,000 bales. In 1903–4 the total American crop was 10,000,000 bales, of which Great Britain only received 2,500,000 bales, while the Continent took over 3,300,000 bales, and the American manufacturers over 4,234,000 bales. So that the problem was not only how to keep pace with our own requirements, but to allow for the increasing demand in America and on the Continent; and there was reason to believe that the possibility of increasing the area of American cultivation was small. He believed that our cotton industry now required a supply of 3,000,000 bales over our share of an average crop, with a probable increase of 400,000 bales a year, and this additional supply must be procurable at a reasonable price, for it did not matter how much cotton could be obtained, unless the price enabled the manufacturers to obtain a profit on what he produced, the conditions of the additional supply must be such as would enable the finished production to be sold at prices which would be remunerative under average conditions. Such arrangements would therefore have to be made, which would provide that the countries which produced raw cotton would be able to sell it to the manufacturer at a moderate price. The problem, therefore, was to find different parts of the world where cotton could be produced at such a price as would enable manufacture to be carried on. When times of prosperity come upon the people, they were too apt to consider that was going to be the normal condition of things, and were apt to relax their efforts and leave the future to chance. Cotton manufacturers in the past had been too regardless of the future, and that was the temptation which was especially likely to arise during a year of abundant prosperity. He suggested to those interested in the greater production of cotton that when their pockets were full, that was the time to increase their subscription to the Cotton Growing Association, the object of which was to help the manufacturers to get a greater supply of cotton. No one who went into the facts could fail to see that whatever increase was made in the production of cotton, it would be a work of time to bring that production up to our real requirements.

Where was this country to find its additional supplies? The greatest gratitude was due to the Cotton Growing Association for the efforts it had made to find out where suitable cotton could be grown, and the efforts they had made to foster the industry in those places where it could be grown. He expressed his greatest admiration for the hard work they had done and the self-sacrifice they had made. Especially was gratitude due to this association when one recollected that many of those who formed it were not directly interested in the manufacturing industry. Those engaged in the manufacture, he was sure, would be quite willing to admit the great good that had been done. The Association had stated as the result of careful examination that, with hardly one exception, cotton could be successfully grown in every British colony or protectorate with a tropical climate. It was feared that any great development could hardly take place in India of cotton of a quality which could compete with the American product in our mills. The next part of the world to which attention had been directed was the West Indies, and in Barbadoes, St. Vincent and other islands cotton cultivation had been successfully commenced and this season there had been a production of 5,000 bales, worth £100,000. He would not say more about that than that it was a most encouraging result. The first shipments had sold at 16½d. per pound, and the industry could be still more largely developed with plentiful funds. The next part of the world which was alluded to in the memorandum of the British Cotton Growing Association was South and East Africa, and perhaps he might congratulate the Colonial Secretary on the fact that East Africa had now come under the control of his Department. There were found in Uganda districts in which cotton could be grown with advantage to the country as well as to our home markets. Owing to lack of funds very little had been done except to establish the fact that Egyptian cotton would grow well in East Africa. In Nyassaland machinery and seed had been supplied to the planters and some advances had been made. The growing crop was estimated at 10,000 bales of Egyptian cotton worth over £100,000. Three years ago cotton was unknown in this colony. With ample funds probably as good results could be obtained in British East Africa, Rhodesia, and South Africa, and if the capital was found there was every probability in a few years time this part of the Empire would produce annually 500,000 bales of long stapled cotton. He did hope that the attention of the Government and the cultivators would be devoted to the development of the cotton industry in these territories, and sufficient encouragement would be given to them to give the experiment a full chance of success. Last Friday he received a letter from a settler in the northern part of the Transvaal Colony who had a very strong belief, which was supported by those who knew the country well, that there were large tracts in South Africa which were capable of growing satisfactory cotton. This correspondent stated that his experimental crops of cotton were promising well, and he should send the samples when ripe for examination by the Agricultural Department of the Transvaal. There did, therefore, seem some hope that unless the price of cotton became uncertain they might establish in that Colony cotton-growing with successful prospects before it.

He passed on to West Africa. It was well known by all who had taken any interest in this subject that the conditions of soil, climate, labour, and other things were very favourable to the production of cotton of good quality in many parts of the West African Colonies, and there seemed to be a very good prospect of our being able to satisfy a large part of our requirements from those regions. The difficulty existing there, and probably in other parts of our territories, was that of the cost of transport. It could easily be ascertained what it would cost to grow cotton in particular districts, but the important question was what it would cost to bring the produce to the coast. He met, last autumn, a gentleman who was a Government official in one part of Nigeria. He was the son of a very respected former Member of this House, Sir Richard Temple, and he told him that in a large district in Nigeria everything was favourable to the growing of cotton, but it was quite impossible at present to bring it down to the coast at reasonable cost. There was a further difficulty, on getting the cotton to the coast, of finding the means of transport to this country, but if cotton was grown in sufficient quantities that difficulty would be got over. What the official in question said was wanted was probably a railway of some kind to bring the cotton from the district where it was grown to some point in the Niger where it could be transported to the coast during the three months of the year when the river was high enough to allow of the transportation being carried out. This was one of the points upon which they might fairly ask for the active co-operation of the Government, and that without dealing with the question from anything like a selfish or narrow point of view.

The cotton trade was a trade of a very artificial kind. There was an element of artificiality in the fact that we had to bring the cotton from long distances to our manufacturers. Another element of artificiality was that 80 per cent. of our manufactures must be supplied for export. These things went hand in hand. We wanted cotton, and these territories if properly developed, would give us it. By this means we should civilise the undeveloped regions and turn them into much needed markets for our goods. Not only should we have helped these countries to develop their resources, but we should be able to make up the deficiency which was found even in average years in the supply of the American markets, and also provide for the increasing quantity which we required to make up for the growing amount which was consumed in America and on the Continent. He did not think that a subject of greater interest, looking to the future welfare of this country, could have been brought before the House. He was very pleased that the opportunity had been given him of opening this discussion, and he had great pleasure in proposing the Resolution which stood in his name—

> "That, in view of the peril to which the industries of the United Kingdom using cotton as the principal raw material of their manufactures are exposed by their too great dependence on the United States of America as their source of supply, and the good results of the operations already undertaken by the British Cotton Growing Association, this House desires to express its appreciation of the benefits derived by the encouragement afforded by His Majesty's Government to the work of the association, and looks to a continuance of their good offices as one of the essential conditions of a speedy development of the resources of the Colonies, Dependencies, and Protectorates of the Crown as additional sources of supply of the cotton needed for the maintenance of regular and adequately remunerated employment in one of the greatest of the national industries."

*Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) seconded the Resolution, and said that both operatives and employers were very pleased that the hon. Baronet had had an opportunity of raising the question. The urgency in regard to the supply of cotton in Lancashire had gone on for four years, and it had reached a pitch at which they felt that something should be done and they were anxious to do it. Looking back four years, those of 1901 and 1902 were depressed, and 1903 saw many people idle, and it was estimated that the loss was not less than £2,000,000 in the way of short time, loss of wages, as well as of profit. Coming to 1904 the loss could not be estimated, but for the first six or eight months such a condition of things prevailed in Lancashire that none of them wished to see again. Short time was very general, and thousands of pounds were paid out of the operatives' funds. It had been said that the condition of things in some of their large towns, chiefly those dependent upon American cotton for their mills, had never been witnessed since the days of the cotton famine, and he was sure those who lived in those times did not wish to see them recur. That condition of matters had brought about a desire on the part of the trade to do something to remedy the evil, and, as usual in their county, this was a matter which both sides could look at with similar interest, so the employees and employers decided to take joint action, and as the result, the British Cotton Growing Association was formed, which was bearing good fruit. That association was governed by representatives of the employers' associations, representatives of the operatives' association, and individuals in the county of weight and influence who gave valuable aid to the work of the association. Both employers and employed had contributed to the funds. The operatives had contributed money to the extent of £9,000 or thereabouts from the different trade unions, and some of the workpeople had contributed a day's wage. The co-operative societies had also contributed a large amount of money in shares towards the formation of this association. In 1901–3 they thought that £50,000 was sufficient to carry on this work, but in November of the following year they raised a sum of £100,000, and last year it was felt by those responsible for the movement that nothing less than £500,000 was required to give this scheme a thorough trial. This was the sum which they believed would enable them to obtain relief from the monopoly and risk from the cotton corners to which they had been subject during the last few years.

The figures as to price showed the need for relief in regard to their dependence on America for 70 per cent. of their cotton supply, and encouraged them to widen the field of growth so that a sudden drought or a sudden demand in America might not send up prices. Mr. William Tattersall stated that in January, 1904, the price of cotton per lb. was 6·88d.; in March, 8·78d.; in May, 7·12d.; in July, 6·18d.; in September, 5·80d.; in November, 5·08d.; and December, 3·77d.; showing a difference of something like 4d. per lb., or 107 per cent. on the same article. They did not want these fluctuations, which were governed by the supply, to continue. Mr. Tattersall also stated that the cotton crop from America for 1898 was 11,181,000 bales and the average price that year was $3\frac{5}{16}$d.; in 1900 the crop was 9,440,000 and the average price $5\frac{15}{32}$d.; in 1901 the crop was 10,425,000 and the price $4\frac{3}{4}$d., while in 1904 it was 10,124,000 bales and the price was 6·6d. They had to include in that calculation the exceptional demand made in America for the cotton and a greater demand on the Continent, the result being that if the growth had only gone down 250,000 bales the price had gone up 2d. The large American crop this year—he thought it was estimated at over 13,000,000 bales—did not effect the urgency or the importance of this work, and the necessity of new sources of supply remained. In the words of the Report of the Cotton Growers' Association—

> "A shortage may occur next year or the year after with the same disastrous results to the cotton trade as have been experienced recently. In any case, some few years must elapse before the cotton grown under the auspices of the association can be of sufficient quantity to have an appreciable effect on the market. In the meantime the requirements of the world are increasing year by year and the necessity for new sources of supply are as urgent as ever."

What had the association been doing? Their work had covered something like twelve or fourteen districts and they had excellent reports from many of them, although in a few they had only just started in their work. Experimental work was going on in India, the West Indies, West Africa, Gambia, Lagos, Southern Nigeria, and British Central Africa. As an example of the kind of work that was being done he would take the case of West Africa. The council stated that they had been advised that in order to encourage the natives to take up cotton it was essential that they should be able to depend on a ready market at a fixed price for their produce, and they had entered into an important agreement with the Government of West Africa whereby in consideration of certain grants being made to them by the Governments of Sierra Leone, Lagos, and Southern Nigeria, amounting on the aggregate to £6,500 a year, the association guaranteed to purchase all seed cotton offered at a fixed price of a 1d. a pound for three years. The association further undertook to provide efficient ginning and buying facilities and to provide experts for the instruction of the natives. The association further undertook to establish a model plantation and to spend the sum of £10,000 gross in each colony annually for the next three years. They expected that the next three years would and show the possibilities of these districts, they anticipated, that as a consequence of this expenditure of £30,000, they would be assured of a constant supply from this part of the Empire.

This was not merely a question affecting the cotton trade only; it extended to dyers, printers, bleachers, and finishers, the banks and railway companies, merchants, shippers, colliery owners, machine makers, and many others, not forgetting the workpeople employed in those trades. All these people were directly interested in the success of the movement. He had no complaint to make against the Government in the matter; the Colonial Office had given them the assistance of their influence as far as they could; but it was desired to impress upon the Government the necessity of there being no relaxation of effort or withdrawal of sympathy simply because a good spell of trade was being now experienced. Hay must be made while the sun shone, so as to ensure that when a cloud did come there would be means of coping with it. The association wished it to be clearly understood that what they were doing would benefit not only the trade of this country but also the colonies themselves. What they asked was that the Government should assist the development by encouraging the provision of transport facilities and railway communications. Their object in bringing forward this matter was to let it be seen that the movement was not dead, and that they did not mean to let it die; and also to ask the Government to continue their sympathy with the movement and, if possible, to give more assistance in the way of transport facilities. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the peril to which the industries of the United Kingdom using cotton as the principal raw material of their manufactures are exposed by their too great dependence on the United States of America as their source of supply, and the good results of the operations already undertaken by the British Cotton Growing Association, this House desires to express its appreciation of the benefits derived by the encouragement afforded by His Majesty's Government to the work of the association, and looks to a continuance of their good offices as one of the essential conditions of a speedy development of the resources of the Colonies, Dependencies, and Protectorates of the Crown as additional sources of supply of the cotton needed for the maintenance of regular and adequately remunerated employment in one of the greatest of the national industries."

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) said this matter had changed considerably since last year. Then the price of cotton was about 9d., and this year it was about 4d. Last year the crop in America was 10,000,000 bales, this year it was about 13,500,000 bales. It was true that only about 12,500,000 bales would be delivered, and 1,000,000 would be carried over to next season. The world's total consumption of American cotton was 11,500,000 bales, so there would be a surplus of 2,000,000 bales. The extraordinary scarcity of last year was due to a succession of unfavourable seasons, coupled with an insect pest which had done great harm. There had been an immense increase in cotton growing in America, but he could not agree that the land available for cotton growing was practically exhausted.

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON said he did not intend to go so far as that, but probably the extent to which the area could be enlarged was inconsiderable.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH said that, as an old cotton merchant who had been in the trade for forty-five years, and had had occasion to watch very closely the development in America during that time, his impression was that, if the labour could be found, the cotton-growing area could be doubled or trebled. The difficulty lay not in the land so much as in the question of labour. It was all a matter of price. At the prices of last year the labour difficulty largely disappeared as the growers could afford to pay higher rates, but with the price at 4d. it was difficult to make growing pay. This year there had been a very good crop, and he believed there would be a good supply next year also. It was very desirable to expand the area of cotton growing, as we were far too dependent upon the United States where they had a perfect genius for manipulating prices by speculation, with the result that when there was a short crop prices went up to a greater degree than was really justified, but he had not much faith in enlarging our supply by artificial means. The Indian crop last year was about 3,000,000 bales, but it was nearly all consumed in India itself, the balance going to China and Japan. His own impression was that our best chance of increasing the supply lay in Egypt, in the Sudan, on the one hand, and in Scinde on the other, where, in the course of the next few years, irrigation works would probably make a considerable difference. But in any case the price would bring the supply. If prices ruled high, we were sure to get the supply. If they ruled low, then the supply fell. With higher prices he thought the supply from America would go on increasing, but he doubted whether it would at a price of 4d. No doubt the price suited Lancashire very well; the present year would probably be the best Lancashire had had in the life of the present generation, and would go far to make up for last year, when for six months the operatives were on short time and the manufacturers made little or no profit. But it was not good for trade to have either excessively high or excessively low prices. His belief was that an average price of 5d. per pound was the price which paid the grower reasonably well and enabled the consumer to work with advantage. He wished God-speed to all the efforts of the Cotton Growing Association.

Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) agreed that we ought, if possible, to make our cotton supply independent of a foreign country, and that, in our own Colonies and dependencies we should, as far as possible, provide against a recurrence of the unhappy events of last year. The points to which the Resolution called attention were, to his mind, exactly the points to which attention ought to be directed in regard to an important industry of this kind. In the first place, attention was called to the perils incident to being so entirely dependent on a supply from one source. As long as the industry was so dependent there was likely to be a recurrence of the events of last year. The only effective remedy for the difficulties arising from shortage of crop and fluctuation of price was to have as large an area as possible from which to obtain supplies of raw material, so that under the doctrine of averages the total supply should be regular whatever might be the conditions in any one particular part of the world. It was unnecessary to emphasise that part of the Resolution. If a great industry carried on under somewhat artificial conditions, like the cotton industry, was to be maintained, every effort must be made to find a supply of the raw material which would be outside the fluctuations and perils to which attention has been called. There were undoubted perils in regard to the supply from the United States. Reference had been made to the growing demand on the Continent and elsewhere for the raw material of cotton, but the increased demand in the cotton-growing districts of the United States themselves constituted a still more serious menace to the textile industries of Lancashire. He did not believe in the prophecies of evil in which Mr. Carnegie sometimes indulged, or that in the long run the great industrial manufactures would have to be carried on where the raw material was produced. He was not an alarmist to that extent, but it was undoubtedly a most important duty of those who looked forward to the maintenance of the industries of this country and the interests of the operatives therein engaged, to make sure that those industries should not be imperilled in reference to their supplies of raw material, so far as it was possible to make arrangements to guarantee them against shortage.

The Report of the Cotton Growing Association produced a hopeful expectation, as far as experiments had gone, that over a large area of the world cotton could be grown successfully at prices and under conditions suitable for the Lancashire industry, if only the opportunity were given. So far as the Cotton Growing Association was concerned it had done and was doing a very beneficial work; it had spent its own money in a way which had already produced great results, and if its expectations were realised, there was no reason why, after a series of years, we might not get a sufficient supply from outside sources to guarantee the Lancashire industry against the fluctuations and shortage which must constantly occur so long as we relied on the United States alone. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Clitheroe as to the duties of the Government. There was no desire that the Government should undertake duties that could be properly carried out by private enterprise. The resources of Lancashire were sufficient so far as the matters were those that could be properly dealt with by private enterprise; but there were a large number of important matters with which private enterprise was not suited to deal. It was not suggested that railways should be constructed through deserts, but that in districts where a probability of success in cotton growing had been shown by experiment the Government should assist by providing railways and means of communication, and thus aiding the general development of the districts concerned. He did not complain of what had been done hitherto by the Government, but he thought it right that the extreme importance of this movement should be emphasised in the House, that the real advantages the association had already conferred should be pointed out, and that it should be known that this association, with all its expert knowledge, had formed the opinion that over these large areas cotton could be grown on remunerative terms. Under these circumstances they looked to the Government to give that additional assistance which private enterprise could not supply, but which must come from the Government themselves, and therefore he heartily supported the Resolution.

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said this question was of such enormous importance to the constituents whom he had the honour to represent in that House, and also to the British Cotton Growing Association of which he was an official, that he ventured very warmly on their behalf to welcome and support the Motion. He agreed with the view of the hon. Member for Flintshire that it was not the shortage of suitable land in the United States that restricted the supply of cotton that we might receive from that country. The real difficulty was the question of labour. He had had a curious confirmation of that in two different ways recently. A friend of his received a letter from a prominent politician in the United States expressing the view that sooner or later—and sooner rather than later—the people of the United States would want to deport from their shores ten or eleven millions of negroes and send them back to Africa. He (Mr. Emmott) thought that was a rather impossible thing to do, but it showed what some politicians of the United States were thinking. If that happened it would at once take away from cotton-growing in the United States half-a-million of black farmers who grew cotton in the country. Another letter was shown to him from a gentleman in the Western States who expressed the opinion that the difficulty in increasing the crop of American cotton arose from the fact that they could not find sufficient labour; and the writer expressed the view that it would be necessary if they were going to increase the crop—which he said they might easily double—to import Chinese labour to do the picking. This showed how very uncertain it was whether our supplies from the United States would increase or not.

It was clearly right that we should try as far as possible to help ourselves in regard to this matter. The earlier and initial stages of cotton-growing in a new country were very laborious and difficult; but when they had got over those difficulties and established the fact that cotton could be grown at a remunerative rate the industry became very profitable. That was shown in the case of the United States. It was shown even more strikingly in the case of Egypt, for in Egypt, although the crop was of necessity very much smaller it was so profitable that land often paid as much as £5 or £6 an acre in the way of rent, a scale which would make the mouths of many landowners in this country water. It was shown also in the case of Brazil, where the production of cotton had increased enormously, and also in the case of India. Obviously if they could grow a larger quantity within the British Empire there would be a doubly beneficial result, for it would be beneficial to the trade of Lancashire, and be even more beneficial to the places where the cotton was grown.

He would state one or two specific results which had resulted from the action of the British Cotton Growing Association. The quantity of sea island cotton grown in the West Indian Islands last year was about 1,000 bales of this particular kind of cotton, and this year the crop was expected to produce 5,000 bales. Not only in this instance had the quantity increased but the quality of the cotton had also improved. The inhabitants of the United States were becoming jealous of this success in the West Indies, and they were reconsidering the exportation of cotton seed, to diminish the risk of competition between the West Indian Islands and themselves. In the Soudan he believed there was a great field for an increase in the growth of cotton. The most encouraging results had been shown, for in 1902 the production was 800 Kautars, in 1903 7,000, and 1904 12,000 Kautars. In one portion of Central Africa last season, a season which proved to be unfavourable for cotton growing, 1,000 bales were produced, and the British Cotton Growing Association believed that 10,000 bales would be grown there this year, and they would be worth £100,000. The entire exports from British Central Africa only amounted to £30,000 at the present time, and it was therefore evident what a immense benefit might be done this colony by an increased growth of cotton. He might refer to Lagos and other places where, although the results had been slow, something had already been achieved, and if the Government would continue to help as they were helping, he felt sure that with patience, perseverance, and scientific aid, a great deal more might be done for the cotton industry and for our possessions across the seas.

He wished to thank the Government for the assistance which the Colonial Office had given upon this question. He knew that the Colonial Secretary was deeply interested in this question, and he thought they also ought to give their thanks to the Under-Secretary the Duke of Marlborough, who had taken such a continuous interest in this matter from the moment he took office down to the present time. The Colonial Office had helped them in many ways by providing scientific experts and to some extent paying for them. They had also helped the association by advice, and they had arranged to give free carriage to cotton grown in that area for a specified time. They had some grounds therefore to hope that in future there might be a very great increase in the growth of cotton in the British Empire.

He had also indicated that there were very great and serious difficulties to be met. In the first place they must find suitable soil and suitable seed, and that was often a matter of careful experiment extending over many months, sometimes years before they achieved the most satisfactory results. In the second place they must interest the natives and the native chiefs in the growth of this commodity or else they could not get best results. In the third place they must be willing to offer, as the British Cotton Growing Association had agreed to offer, for a series of years a certain specified price. They must take the risk of loss and the chance of gain. In the last place it was necessary, if cotton was to be grown on a large scale, to arrange for roads and railways in order that they might carry to the coast and ship to England and elsewhere. Matters of this kind could best be done by cordial co-operation between such an association as the British Cotton Growing Association and the Government. They could not expect great results quickly. Patience and perseverance and, above all, scientific experiments were required to arrive at the best results. He was told that Germany, which country had for some years been experimenting in this matter, had not been put off by the fact that some of her earlier experiments were unsuccessful and had gone on experimenting with artificial manures and with different seeds. They had found out what was the best seed and the best soil for that purpose. That was the kind of work which the British Cotton Growing Association must go on with for many years if they were really to arrive at the result they desired.

Some money of, course, must be wasted. Some had already been wasted, but the association was learning wisdom and buying its experience, and if the happy co-operation between it and the Government continued to exist—as he hoped it would—great results would be achieved. He thanked the Government for making the grant to the Imperial Institute for the purpose of experimenting in regard to cotton. He believed there would very shortly be opened in the institute an exhibition for the purpose of allowing anybody who was interested in the matter to see what was being done in various parts of the world in regard to cotton. But their gratitude to the Government was of the kind that looked for favours to come. He would like the Colonial Secretary to tell them when the British Central African railway to Blantyre was likely to be opened. A considerable quantity of cotton was being grown in that country, and it was very important that railways should be opened as soon as possible. He also wanted to know what the Government intended to do for the development of Northern Nigeria. It must be very difficult for the Colonial Office to extract from the Treasury any more money in regard to Northern Nigeria, and it was very natural when money was not plentiful that the Government should be afraid of public opinion not backing them up in any large expenditure there. Meanwhile he asked them to remember that the cotton trade was a trade of national importance, and to take care that we did nothing to injure it, but rather to increase the supplies of raw material from the British Empire, the production of which would benefit not only the Cotton trade of this country but also the Colonies, dependencies, and protectorates where that cotton was grown.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) said that as one of the Members representing Liverpool he desired to associate himself with the proposition now before the House. Up to the present most hon. Members who had taken part in the discussion were those whose constituencies were interested in the manufacture of cotton goods, but he wished to point out that Liverpool was doubly interested in the cotton trade, because it was, in the first place, the port through which the cotton supplies reached the United Kingdom, and it was also the principal port from which the manufactured cotton goods were exported. It was also the principal market for the sale of cotton. Therefore, in Liverpool they naturally took a very great interest in this movement. It was evident from the discussion which had already taken place that this movement was viewed with favour on all sides of the House. This movement was promoted by the people engaged in the trade, including both employers and employed, merchants and spinners, who felt the necessity for securing a greater supply of raw cotton, and who had started this movement for the purpose of growing cotton in parts of the British Empire where the climate and soil were particularly adapted to the growth of cotton, but where there was a great necessity for some encouragement being given in order that the cotton-growing industry should be planted in those parts. Speaking as the representative of the merchants of Liverpool, he was authorised to inform the House that they felt very strongly upon the question of doing something to make this country less dependent upon the American cotton supply. They recognised that, at the present time, and for some considerable time in the future, the American supply of cotton must be the principal supply open to this country, but, at the same time, they were fully aware that the fact that they had only one supply made the market particularly susceptible to corners and other inconveniences detrimental to the cotton trade. They also knew that the demand for cotton in America was increasing faster than the supply, and they recognised that in a few years time the exports of cotton from the United States would begin to decrease owing to the increased demand for it in the United States itself. On these grounds, it was desirable that they should increase their sources of supply from various parts of the British Empire. The Imperial aspect of it was that they found in this movement a means of drawing the Colonies and the mother country closer together, and this was a method of accomplishing it which was approved by all Parties. While it was not desirable to discourage individual initiative, the Government ought, in view of what was done in other countries, to do something to assist the trade of this country, and at all events to give it their hearty and sympathetic co-operation wherever possible.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he thought the debate which had taken place was likely to be a very useful one. There was a general concord of opinion, and although there was not a large attendance of Members that was no doubt due to the fact that it was felt that there was nothing controversial involved, and that those who were not present agreed that this subject was an appropriate one to which their attention should be directed, and one upon which the Government might very properly be invited to give such help as a Government could give. He thought the hon. Baronet the Member for Preston was entitled to their thanks for having brought a very important subject to the notice of the House. He wished to join in urging the Colonial Office and the India Office to take all such steps as they properly could to foster the growth of cotton in British dependencies and to obviate the necessity of our depending so largely for our supplies on the United States. It was clear, from the growing number of cotton mills in the United States, that they would absorb a greater and greater quantity of the cotton produced there; and when the cotton supplies were drawn almost entirely from one country it was more easy to organise rings and capture the market than when there were a number of sources of supply. These were two reasons for concluding that in this matter the interests of the whole British Empire coincided with the interests of the trade in Lancashire. Among the numerous places in the world where cotton could be grown, he had not heard much said that evening about Uganda and the East African Protectorate, where much cotton could be grown and where labour was comparatively abundant. From Burma, where there was a good deal of land still unoccupied, a considerable supply could be drawn. In joining other hon. Members in commending this subject to the benevolent consideration of the Colonial Office, he did not suggest large direct expenditure, but rather that opportunities of growing cotton should be brought to the attention of growers, that communications should be developed, and that something should be done in the way of helping scientific production of the best kind, as had been done in the West Indies with regard to sugar production. Whatever the Colonial Office might do in this matter would have the hearty sympathy of the House.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) said it was a matter of great satisfaction to him that for once the Department over which he had the honour to preside had met with the approval of all sides of the House. Government aid had been invoked very freely from all quarters of the House, and the circumstances under which it was invoked marked an interesting change of opinion. The Continental nations who had colonies, and more particularly the French and the Dutch, had set us the example of developing the great estates under their charge, an example which it was almost necessary that we should follow to some extent. He thought even the strongest believers in private enterprise and freedom from State interference recognised that the conditions under which that maxim might be quite applicable in former days had altered in the present time. Nowadays it was almost hopeless for individuals to conduct undertakings that involved a very large expenditure, a return on which could not be expected for many years, for they found themselves confronted with the far-sighted and most formidable rivalry of States and cities. We spent immense sums in acquiring large territories, and very large sums were granted from the Exchequer for their administration. In the case of Northern Nigeria, as had been pointed out, £450,000 a year was annually granted for administration; and, personally, he held the view that it would be good business, when there was such an expenditure as that on administration, to spend also £5,000 to £10,000 a year in prospecting and discovering, so as to get more return to the country. His term of office, however, had been in the lean years, and he thought hon. Members would recognise that to approach the Treasury in such years with a demand for large grants for these purposes would be useless. But he would like to point out what had been done at the Colonial Office, the India Office, and the Board of Trade for the assistance of the British Cotton-Growing Association.

That association was formed in 1902, and they had co-operated with them with great promptitude. He thought he was accurate in saying that the production of cotton within the confines of the Empire since 1902 had been trebled. The best way of fostering the cotton industry within our Colonial Empire was in general to educate the natives in the production of that commodity. The greatest success which had taken place, so far as the operations with which we had been concerned went, was in the West Indies. Although the production in 1904 was very small, there was an estimated production for this year of 5,000 bales. The quality of the cotton produced there was, as had been pointed out, one which was specially desirable for Lancashire. A system of scientific superintendence had been in operation in the West Indies, and the Government had endeavoured to follow somewhat similar methods elsewhere. Since last year they had in West Africa agreed to appoint a scientific agricultural Commissioner, who would supervise all the cotton-growing operations, and would, so far as possible, superintend, educate, and instruct the natives. It was hoped that good results would be obtained there. In British Central Africa a very considerable result had been achieved. In 1904 the value of the cotton produced was not much more than £1,000; for 1905 the estimated production was some £50,000. In Sierra Leone, Lagos, and Southern Nigeria the colonial Governments had contributed to the Cotton Growing Association £2,500 a year. The railways in these States had carried free of charge all cotton which had been produced by the British Cotton Growing Association. Experiments had also been made in Gambia. He maintained that a good deal had been done by the Colonial Office for the association considering the time which had been available for the purpose. The Secretary of State for India had made representations to the Indian Government, and that Government had undertaken, conjointly with the association, to bear the cost of an experiment which had been started in Bengal. Our best hopes in India were centred on Scinde, where operations had been going on very briskly, and where an officer who had had great experience in India was now making experiments with the seed of the Egyptian plant. He was sanguine that in Scinde this cotton might have a very great future. The increase in the acreage under cotton in that province was very considerable, and the output had nearly doubled in the last three years. He ought not to omit to mention what the Board of Trade had done also for the assistance of this great industry by granting another £500 a year to Professor Dunstan and his staff at the Imperial Institute for scientific investigation and selection of seeds. It had already been recognised how valuable a service had been rendered by these investigations. He did not wish unduly to glorify the Departments of which he had been speaking, but he wished to point out that they had not relaxed their efforts for a moment since last year. In conclusion, he would add an expression of his hopes that Lancashire itself would co-operate readily and liberally with the British Cotton Growing Association, which had worked so hard in the last three years in this great enterprise. It had been supported by some of the employers, but the present time was one in which surely a great effort ought to be made, and he trusted that out of its present prosperity Lancashire would contribute liberally to the magnificent work which the association was doing.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said that as a member of the Cotton Growing Association, and one engaged in the cotton trade, he should not be suspected of opposing this Resolution, but he did regret the bringing forward of the Resolution because he thought it was quite unnecessary. It was really a testimonial to the right hon. Gentleman and the Colonial Department. If the Department had done everything they could have done and should have done, and were going to do everything they could do, why bring this matter before the House? He was quite prepared to join in a testimonial to the right hon. Gentleman and his Department on a proper occasion, but there was a danger about it of which he wished to warn the House. They in that House knew quite well what the motives and feelings of the Government were, but what would outsiders say? They would reflect upon the reputation of Lancashire, and would say that the county was coming to the House of Commons in a selfish way. Lancashire had the reputation of being a selfish county, and he had heard it said that they looked keenly after their own interests. He wanted to warn the public and Members of the House that Lancashire did not want anything different in this matter from any other place. The people of that county were not coming cap in hand for any particular favour. He knew the fiscal question was, like King Charles's head, always bobbing up, and he did not want to frighten away the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman was gallantly sticking to his position to-night as a Lancashire Member, even though some people thought he had not always done so. They had heard about Empire-grown cotton, and he could not help thinking of the parallel idea of Empire-grown corn. Lancashire was quite sound upon this matter, but it did not want anything contrary to the fiscal principles to which the county was so enthusiastically devoted. They did not want any Empire grown cotton grown on false economic principles—grown by Government bolstering up of any kind whatever. During the American War Lancashire stuck faithfully to the North, though it suffered tremendously for its faithfulness. It would stick with equal faithfulness to its economic principles. They did not want Empire-grown cotton at the expense of sound fiscal principles. All they asked was that the Government should treat the Empire as an estate and develop it not for any particular trade.

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said he very much regretted the tone of some of the hon. Member's remarks, because he remembered he made the same appeal on behalf of Lancashire last year when the matter was discussed.

Mr. Harwood.

MR. HARWOOD: What appeal? I have not made any appeal.

*MR. PEEL said the appeal was made when the hon. Gentleman asked the House not to imagine that Lancashire came cap in hand in order to get something out of the Government. The hon. Member said so last year. He himself was glad to see this sudden renewal of interest in the cotton-growing industry on the Opposition Benches. It was unfortunate that the hon. Member for Bolton should have insisted on bringing forward the fiscal question on which there had been a good many discussions during recent Tuesdays and Wednesdays. [AN HON. MEMBER: How do you know?] The hon. Member seemed to object to a testimonial being offered to the Colonial Office in regard to this matter.

MR. HARWOOD: What I said was that I did not like its being brought forward because I thought it might lead to a misunderstanding of the position of Lancashire.

*MR. PEEL said he did not think there was the slightest fear of any misunderstanding of the position of Lancashire by the bringing forward of the Motion. He wished to join in the congratulations to the Colonial Office, and the other Departments concerned, on the work which had been done during the past year for the development of cotton growing. He was glad that attention had been given first of all to West Africa, because it offered perhaps the best field within the British Empire for an increased production of cotton. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken of the possibilities of East Africa and Uganda, pointing out, quite rightly, that there was a large native population whose labour was available for the growth of cotton. It should, however, be remembered that Uganda was a considerable distance from the sea, and that the cost of transport must for some time, at all events, militate against the production of cotton in marketable quantities. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had read an interesting book by Sir Charles Elliot on East Africa, in which he indicated the opinion that he was not hopeful for the present that much could be done in the way of cotton growing. In West Africa there was a very different position, ample opportunity being afforded for the production of cotton on a large scale. He need hardly remind the right hon. Gentleman, the distinguished historian opposite, that West Africa, especially the northern parts of Nigeria, had had for centuries a reputation for its supply of cotton and its fine cotton cloths. The population of the country had been accustomed for these centuries not only to the growth but to the manipulation of cotton in various ways. Therefore, there was the advantage of native labour, which had been disturbed when the slave trade was put an end to, but which was now reaching its old proportions since we had given the natives security of government. A great development of the cotton industry might consequently be expected, as the natives had a very strong commercial instinct, and as soon as they knew that there was a demand for it they would grow and deal in it most freely. In Northern Nigeria there was an immense extent of the very best class of cotton ground. He might remind his right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary that last year he had promised that experiments would be made in cotton growing and management, and also in supplying good seed to the natives. He did not think that the right hon. Gentleman had done that on a large scale.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: A good deal has been done.

*Mr. PEEL said he had not heard every word of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, because there had been so much hilarity on the opposite side of the House. He was, however, extremely glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman had said, because this was one of the cases where Government might co-operate with private enterprise. He was very much against setting up large plantations for cotton growing; his idea was small holdings cultivated by the natives themselves, and central ginning factories of the best type in each district. He had every confidence, from all the reports he had had from West Africa, that there would be a great development in the growth of first-class cotton there, and that a sufficient quantity would be raised to make it marketable in Lancashire, and sufficient in amount to meet any shortage there might be in the American production, although it must be some time before their markets could be in any sense independent of the American supplies.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in view of the peril to which the industries of the United Kingdom using cotton as the principal raw material of their manufactures are exposed by their too great dependence on the United States of America as their source of supply, and the good results of the operations already undertaken by the British Cotton Growing Association, this House desires to express its appreciation of the benefits derived by the encouragement afforded by His Majesty's Government to the work of the Association, and looks to a continuance of their good offices as one of the essential conditions of a speedy development of the resources of the Colonies, dependencies, and protectorates of the crown as additional sources of supply of the cotton needed for the maintenance of regular and adequately remunerated employment in one of the greatest of the national industries.—(*Sir William Tomlinson.*)

LOCAL TAXATION.

Mr. PURVIS (Peterborough) said that in bringing before the House the question of the incidence of local taxation, he hardly thought that any fault could be found with the subject as unimportant or inopportune. For some years they had been marking time while the Royal Commission was examining the matter and making up their minds upon it; but for more than four years the Report of that Commission had been in the hands of the public, and there was no reason for marking time any longer, but every reason for going forward. He hoped the Motion he was about to propose would not incur the stigma of being called an abstract Resolution, which was never a favourite with the House, although there was no choice for a private Member but to proceed by way of abstract Resolution. He was not without hope that by the stimulus of public opinion caused by the Report of the Royal Commission, and the Resolutions passed by this House, the Government would not allow the matter to sleep, but give a promise to do something in a practical direction to carry out the object of the Resolution. He might add that on the previous Saturday at the meeting of the Association of Municipal Associations in the Guildhall, the question of the reform of local taxation and of its incidence was brought in directly or indirectly by every representative of those municipal associations.

To return to the Royal Commission; there were several things on which the members differed, but on one thing they were all agreed. That was that no small part of the rates paid by any locality went to meet expenditure in which the locality had no especial interest beyond any other locality in the kingdom; and his Motion was designed to point out that when a locality was ordered to do something for the benefit of the community at large, then the State and not the locality ought to pay for it. For instance, education gave no special benefit to any particular locality, and therefore all orders by the State in regard to education ought to be paid for by the State. Then there was the relief of the poor, and the maintenance of main roads, the cost of which should be shifted from the rates to the Imperial Exchequer. The whole principle of his Resolution was expounded at page 11 of the final Report of the Royal Commission. It had been said that an attempt to distribute the burden which ought to be borne by the Imperial taxpayer and the local ratepayer in proportion to the direct money benefit each received, was like the riddle of the Sphinx. The test that a rate was justifiable was that it would add to the money value of the buildings or land assessed. In short, a rate properly imposed was a profitable investment, and not a burden at all, such as that for defraying the cost of lighting the streets and the removal of house refuse. Then, in regard to the nature of Imperial grants, there were some services which were of the first importance to the nation, but which were more likely to be wel carried out by local bodies. In such cases minute investigation was necessary, with a knowledge of personal character; and the best illustration of that was the relief of the poor. His argument was that such an expenditure ought not to be defrayed from the revenue derived from a particular rate, but from the Consolidated Fund. One reason for that was that assigned revenues from particular taxes were not suitable, because no one could foretell the exact amount required, and the local authorities could not frame their local budgets. Another reason was that assigned revenues from a particular district did not always correspond with the needs of that particular district. Where the service was national, by common consent it ought to be paid for by the nation just as much as the expenditure on the Army and the Navy. He hoped the Government would indicate some intention of bringing forward some legislation to carry out the findings of the Local Taxation Commission without any delay. He begged to move.

Mr. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) said he had great pleasure in seconding the Resolution, because he had no hesitation in saying that the allocation of the present burdens was unjust to the local ratepayers. Education, the maintenance of main roads, all sanitary matters, especially vaccination, should be borne more largely by the Imperial Exchequer than at present. Of late years personal property had grown immensely, and it was only just to the ratepayers that a larger share of the burden of local taxation should be put on the shoulders of the owners of personal property. The effect of the present system was to drive away capital from this country, and invest it in the development of other lands. He hoped the Government would undertake a general rearrangement of the local taxation. They had shown their sense of the inequality of that taxation by carrying out one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission in the passage of the Agricultural Rating Act.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the distinction, affirmed in the main Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, between services preponderantly national but generally onerous to the ratepayers and services preponderantly local which confer upon the ratepayers a direct and peculiar benefit, more or less commensurate with the burden, no arrangement of taxation is equitable which does not provide that local authorities have an amount assigned from the Imperial taxes fully representing the interest of the general community in local expenditure on onerous services."—(*Mr. Purvis.*)

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said they were all agreed with the mover and the seconder of the Resolution that this was a most important subject, and extremely interesting to dwellers in towns as well as those in the rural districts. He quite agreed that agriculture was so burdened with rates in this country that it could not compete with the agricultural industry in other countries where no such burdens existed. He was not sure, however, that the method proposed by the hon. Gentleman for the relief of local taxation would carry out what he desired. He wanted to know how personal property was to be brought in.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

THE BRIGHTON ELECTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*).

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he had intended to ask the Prime Minister what were the intentions of the Government in the face of the news which had arrived that night as to the fate which had befallen a member of his Administration. Notice was given to the Prime Minister that a question of that kind would be raised; the paper was handed to him and the right hon. Gentleman read it, and forthwith marched out of the House. The discourtesy with which the right hon. Gentleman was treating the House, of which he was still nominally the Leader, was becoming absolutely offensive; it had degenerated into personal rudeness. He thought it was about time the House of Commons should resent such behaviour. This was not merely a matter which affected Members on that side of the House. He was certain that if the Leader of the House had happened to be a Liberal, there would have been scenes which would have, at any rate, brought an end to anything of that kind such as had occurred during the past few weeks. He appealed to hon. Members opposite who were gentlemen to resent conduct which was not worthy of an hon. Gentleman, leaving alone the Leader of the most famous Assembly in the world. The Prime Minister having thus treated the notice given him with wilful and deliberate disrespect, he could only proceed in the right hon. Gentleman's absence. Here was an election—not like the other elections which had occurred during the last three or four years—in which the constituencies of the country had been expressing their opinion about the Government. The by-election at Brighton was not produced by a mere accident. The constituency was chosen by the Prime Minister, after a long deliberation, as the constituency the Member for which was sure of re-election on this appointment to office. At least, the right hon. Gentleman said, the air of Brighton was safe enough for the broken nerves and the broken reputation of Ministers. But even Brighton did not save them. The candidate of the Government was a thoroughly popular and a strong local man, and yet he had been rejected by a majority of over 800, while some years ago he was returned by a majority of 2,000. Nobody would say one disparaging word against the hon. Gentleman. He himself had been present at a meeting in Brighton when every speaker spoke in the highest terms of the Tory Candidate; and that was the case at every Liberal meeting. Every circumstance was in favour of the Government. But the confidence which the Government had placed in the gullibility of the electors of Brighton was treated with the contempt which it deserved. The Government was lost long ago to all self-respect. But he appealed to the followers of the Government to try to impress upon their leader that it would be inconsistent with precedent and inconsistent with honour that they should continue in office after the overwhelming verdict which had been given against them at Brighton. He asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury, who was like the faithful sentinel at Pompeii, whether, in the absence of the Prime Minister, he ought not to move the adjournment of the House till Monday in order to give the Government an opportunity of reconsidering their position. The verdict of Brighton proved this, that it was not only education, fiscal reform, or the Sugar Convention of which the country disapproved, but that there was a general and emphatic sense of disgust with the Ministry. This flouting and insult to the House and the country ought not to be tolerated any longer; and there never was a better proof of the self-restraint of the country that they had tolerated it so long.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he thought the House was entitled to have from the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury some intimation of the intentions of the Government, because they met under peculiar circumstances. He understood that on Monday the Budget was to be introduced, and was it right or decent in the face of the remarkable expression of opinion that day that the Government should make preparations for carrying on the finances of the country for another year? Not only that; the House had been engaged for a week in considering what the Secretary for War was pleased to call a scheme of Army reform, but which hon. Members on both sides of the House believed to be a scheme for the destruction of the Volunteer force of this country. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary to send for the Prime Minister, if the First Lord of the Treasury was in the precincts of the House, and let him know that the House desired to be informed what his intentions were. Or, if the right hon. Gentleman wished, as he was entitled to do, to consult his colleagues in the Cabinet as to the procedure they were now to adopt in view of what had happened that evening, he ought to come to the House and explain that it was his intention to do so. The right hon. Gentleman had shown great courage under very discouraging circumstances before, and surely he was not afraid to come and face the House of Commons in regard to the matter which had brought about this election to-day. He felt that an injustice had been done to Scotland in this matter. He saw on the Treasury bench the Secretary to the Board of Trade, who was the Minister that ought to have been offered as a sacrifice. That hon. Member, they all thought, was no doubt fit and suitable to fill a certain office, the vacancy of which had brought about the election in Brighton, the result of which they had just heard. But, the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow was evidently not considered a safe seat, and a post was given to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Brighton. But, even in that part of the country there was hardly a voice which could say anything in favour of the present Government. In the interests of public decency and in the interests of this House, with all its great traditions, they were entitled to have more consideration than they had received from the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman was present in the Chamber a few minutes ago, and he surely knew what had happened at Brighton, even if he did not know what occurred in the House the other evening.

Sir CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said he had listened to the hon. Members opposite, and he was bound to say that he thought they had gone beyond the point to which they were entitled to go in their action—as a result, no doubt, of the exciting news which they had heard from Brighton. They seemed to suggest that it was the duty of the Patronage Secretary to produce the Prime Minister. That was an entirely novel view to take. No doubt the Brighton election had been very acutely contested. Hon. Members on the other side of the House had been deeply interested in the part they had taken in that election; and there had been great discussions as to what had been the deciding influence in bringing about the result of that election. He had appeared in that House in many characters.

An HON. MEMBER on the Opposition Benches: Which character are you in now?

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said he was sometimes spoken of as a Scotsman; but he was a Sussex man, and he knew perfectly well that there had been in Brighton an overweening opinion on the part of the Conservative organisation as to the strength of that organisation. That had caused him, as a Sussex man, considerable apprehension. It was always the case where there had been a great majority in a previous election. He thought hon. Members on the opposite side of the House would agree with him in that; because they knew themselves what injury had been caused to their Party from having too large a majority. There was another cause which had been of influence in this election, and which was of a purely local character; and that was the questions connected with the ecclesiastical position in the country.

AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: You had that at the last election.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said that there was a very strong feeling in regard to these Church questions in Brighton. Hon. Members opposite suggested that the result at Brighton was due to some dereliction of duty on the part of the Government; but he contended that it had far more to do with the state of the Party organisation owing to over-confidence, and with the state of things in that constituency in regard to Church matters.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) said that perhaps in many Administrations the post of Junior Lord of the Treasury was not a very important office, but to the present Government the Whips' office was one of the most important departments on which they relied for their Parliamentary success; and the Government had lost one of their men from that office. He dared say that the Prime Minister must sometimes regret that he had not yet been able to carry his cherished scheme of abolishing the re-election of a Minister after taking office. He thought, after what had happened that day, the House would be ill-advised in approving of such a scheme, because the value of re-election had been proved as well in the past as that day. The hon Baronet opposite thought that the result of the election in Brighton was largely owing to religious causes. He had the advantage of being present at a meeting in Brighton the previous night, and he could tell the hon. Baronet, that, although he did not know the constituency so well as the hon. Baronet claimed to do, there was a tone and temper in the whole constituency which was quite unmistakable as to its Liberalism. The shams and shibboleths of the Government were nothing but cardboard defences when it came to an election. The country was not impressed with the ingenuous trickery of the Prime Minister, and if the Government had the courage of their opinions they would appeal to the country and then see what the result would be. He entirely repudiated the suggestion that this election had no significance. The country was sick of the Government, of their devices, their tricks, of their desertion of their posts, and of the way which they had treated the House. He told the hon. Gentlemen opposite that if they cherished the hope that this was nothing but a passing phase, a regrettable incident which would have no effect upon the total result of the general election, then they were very much mistaken. They, on that side of the House, very much resented the absence of the Prime Minister, for they felt that in discussing this question they ought to have his presence. If the right hon. Gentleman was not able to be present now, why was it that he still claimed to lead this Chamber? It seemed to him that the result of the Brighton election was one which the Prime Minister could not morally ignore, and therefore he entirely supported the view of the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs in the remarks which he had made.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) said that the hon. Member for Renfrew seemed to think that the disaster to his Party had been caused by religious differences between the Protestant Party and the Tory Party in Brighton. Surely, if that were so, some respect should be paid to the religious opinions of so faithful a constituency as that of Brighton. He had been more than twenty-five years a Member of this House. Probably he was one of half-a-dozen present who had had so long an association with this great Chamber; but never before had he witnessed such continuous disrespect and insult to this House from any Government as had been shown recently. It was not only the religious opinions of the electors of Brighton which had disgusted them with the Government; the country could not but have noticed that night after night, and week after week, questions submitted to the consideration of the House had been ignored by the Prime Minister—questions on which the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well he would be defeated if he divided against them. The country had taken notice of all that, even if the Prime Minister had not. And if the Government were to try their hand again in some other constituency, no matter how safe it was supposed to be, depend upon it they would continue to meet with these rebuffs. The action of the Prime Minister was not only an insult to the Opposition and to the Members of the House generally, but it showed scant respect to Mr. Speaker to leave him alone in the Chair night after night without the support or any attendance whatever of a leading representative of the Government. They had present, certainly, a respected Scotch Member who, he thought, was the Lord-Advocate. He knew they had not had a single English law officer in the present Government. They were all Scotchmen or Irishmen. England repudiated this Government from one end of the country to the other; and they could not find a lawyer to fill one of the law offices of the Crown. There was now only one of the Whips left. [Great laughter, during which Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD re-entered the Chamber and took his seat on the Treasury Bench.] He was very glad that the Chief Whip had returned. The right hon. Baronet, whom they all respected, was the one man of honour still left on the Ministerial Benches of the Tory Government.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! The hon. Member may use strong language with regard to political action, but he must not speak of members of the Government as men without honour.

Mr. BROADHURST: I am surprised to hear that I even suggested such a thing.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member referred to the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury bench as the one man of honour in the Government. That is a personal allusion to other Ministers which the hon. Member should not have used.

Mr. BROADHURST said that if he had put it in that way he would withdraw it. He regretted if he put in the "the," and he certainly withdrew it. He saw there was one hon. Member on the Treasury Bench who had a fellow Whip on his left who had had an extraordinarily narrow squeak for his appointment of a Lord of the Treasury. His feeling was that this was a condition of Parliament never before experienced in the life of any man sitting in the House. It was a disgrace to Parliament and to the Government, and the country required that the Government should surrender its trust of honour in order that the national well-being might be secured. They should submit themselves as a whole, and not one now and again, to the consideration and verdict of the country. If they did so, in his judgment, there would be a small handful of them left to occupy the Opposition Benches. He was sure that the Patronage Secretary had the courage of his convictions at all times. He had heard the right hon. Baronet, before he took office, make speeches which were an honour to the country, and which he himself would never forget. [Ministerial ironical laughter]. Yes, when the Government were traducing officers on the field of battle, the right hon. Gentleman stood up in this House for their character, honour, and ability against the whole howling set which sat by his side, and before and behind him. Would the right hon. Baronet make a full, faithful, and complete report to the Prime Minister to-morrow of the proceedings of to-night and ask the Prime Minister whether he would be prepared to-morrow—or to-day rather, since it was after midnight—to make a statement to the House as to what he considered his position to be after the lamentable and disastrous defeat at Brighton—a defeat such as had never been experienced by any Government since 1880, when the late Sir William Harcourt was defeated at Oxford. Surely the chief Whip would promise the House to make his report to the Prime Minister, and ask him to make a clean breast of his position and let the House know what his intentions were in regard to the future.

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham) said that they did not want to bully or assail the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. That right hon. Gentleman had won the respect of his opponents for many reasons which he did not wish to enter into now. But he regretted to hear the hon. Member behind the right hon. Baronet endeavour to put up the lame explanation, which he did not really believe, as to the cause of this situation at Brighton. The hon. Member for Renfrew knew perfectly well that the Brighton election was not the result of over-confidence in the Party organisation, and was not the result of a particular religious controversy. He knew that it was the result of the general political situation, and very largely to the way in which the cause of free trade had been attacked. He could not help thinking that this election looked rather like the beginning of the end. It looked as if events were moving more rapidly than had been anticipated, and, to quote the words already used, "Did you think that the day of retribution would never come; it had come already." The Government were now doing penance for the disingenuousness of years. All their shams, all their shuffles, all their manœuvrings, all their scurrying from the House of Commons, all their ingenious devices of the gag and the guillotine were of no avail. These worked very smoothly here. They enabled the Government to draw their salaries with great regularity, they enabled a Party Press to proclaim each shameful trick as a brilliant triumph and a new victory. But the people now understood it all. The great syndicated newspapers, pulled by one wire from London, would try to explain it all away to-morrow morning, but he did not envy them their task. They would sit up a long time before they could explain away Brighton. They knew perfectly well how to interpret events which had taken place during the last two years, and the conduct of political affairs in the House of Commons. What a career the Conservative Party had had during those years! When the present Prime Minister received the authority of the Conservative Party from the late Lord Salisbury he was possessed of the greatest governing instrument that had been known for a generation. What had he done with it? In the space of two years, not from any conviction which he had, or for the sake of any cause he desired to push forward, but simply by weak and vacillating action, by not having the courage to state his opinions boldly on great controversies, he had wrecked his Party, lost his friends, and broken up his Government by methods which also were not unnoticed in the country, and now they got the news of an election, which was not singular, but which came as the culmination of a long succession of electoral disasters, and was in itself only the herald of a greater storm. He knew nothing of the man who had been lost to the Government, but he knew that one of the principal features in the election was the disgust expressed by the working men and other electors at the treatment of the House of Commons by the Prime Minister.

The House would recollect that on more than one occasion he had used language in the House which it was not pleasant to use, which no one liked to use, and hon. friends had told him he had gone beyond the limits of what was decent and what the country would approve. Had he? He knew that it was not possible within the limits of order to use the language in that House which would not be endorsed by the great majority of voters in the country. They were sick of the Government. Why did they continue in office? Why did the Prime Minister continue? Office at any price was his motto, at the sacrifice of any friend or colleague, at the sacrifice of any principle, by the adoption of any manœuvre, however miserable or contemptible. For whom? For his Party? No. The genius of his Party was not represented in his Government. But for his friends, his personal backers. Those were the men who filled the Government to-day, with no position whatever in the country except a position attained by virtue of having won the favour and smile. In some great crisis in this country, when the ship of State had to be steered through shoals and quicksands, it was usual in English public life to assume that Ministers of the Crown were pecuniarily disinterested. He was not quite so sure whether in practice that was always the case. If not for the emoluments of office, what conceivable reason was there for the Government continuing in their position? The servile majority of the Government was perfectly ready to vote for anything. Their leader was up to all the tricks of the game; he had got the Estimates in arrears; he put on the closure at all hours; when a question came up for discussion which was likely to be awkward, he ran away from the House of Commons. And so the Government might drag on their existence longer, but the day would come surely and swiftly when it would be Brighton all over the country, and the people would express their detestation for the Government and their contempt for its character.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that the event of to-day had shown that the absconding Prime Minister was a good prophet. The right hon. Gentleman was reported to have said three or four weeks ago, and rightly, that, in his judgment, no seat in the whole country was safe for the Tory Party except the City of London and the University of Oxford. He deeply commiserated with the right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary that he had not obtained any information from the Prime Minister. But he had in his possession the latest correspondence of the superior, absconding, and skulking statesman who led the House. He had made a special study of the Prime Minister for a great number of years. The right hon. Gentleman was rather a favourite of his when, in 1891, he fought him in Donegal. He liked him still more to-night when he was hunting him off the Treasury bench. At about 11.20, seeing that the Prime Minister was on the Treasury Bench, he went to the library and wrote him the following polite letter—

"April 5th.

"Dear Mr. BALFOUR," — he was always courteous—"I intend to make some strong comments on your Administration on the adjournment of the House to-night. As I have some disgreeable things to say I put it to you that it is incumbent on you to be present.—Yours truly."

That letter was delivered to the Prime Minister, he read it, and it acted like a bomb-shell, for out he ran. The right hon. Gentleman had the pen of a ready writer; and he wondered the right hon. Gentleman did not discharge his duty by writing an account of the proceedings in the House to the King. A few minutes afterwards he received the following letter from the Prime Minister, which was equally courteous as his own, but more effusive—

"Dear Mr. MACNEILL,—The practice of making the usual moving of the adjournment at midnight the occasion for a general discussion is new. If I was asked I would add that I think it undesirable. The fact that you have, as you tell me, some disagreeable things to say is, I admit, a reason which, taking it by itself, would make me greatly desire to be present."

that was pretty Fanny's way.

"But if the mere fact that some Member of the House wanted to say disagreeable things"

—many Members wanted to say them—

"were a sufficient reason for requiring the House itself, as well as the Government, to sit up beyond midnight, the Twelve O'clock Rule would be practically abrogated."

This, from a right hon. Gentleman who that afternoon had carried a Resolution for the suspension of the Twelve O'clock Rule! The right hon. Gentleman added—

"The desire to say disagreeable things is not so rare as you appear to imagine."

Then the right hon. Gentleman gave him a Parthian shot before he ran away.

"By the way," (that was the usual aristocratic prelude to saying a disagreeable thing) "I rather think that this afternoon you voted against the rule for relaxing the Twelve O'clock Rule on the rare occasions that it is required for the passage of money Resolutions on the Report stage."

And so he did, but the right hon. Gentleman had the courage to say that, in the interest of the House, he should not stay up after twelve o'clock when his personal conduct, as head of the Government, was to be challenged. It was a great joy to him, this Brighton election, because it hastened to drive from office the most detestable statesman that had ever disgraced the Government of Ireland. The Government had become odious to the country and the House. He rarely made an apology, except when he could not help himself; but he pledged himself to put down another Question with reference to Mr. Gerald Loder's position in the Government. That gentleman was personally a kindly man, and, like Charles II., if he never did a wise thing he rarely did an unwise thing. He agreed that Mr. Gerald Loder would have been a much wiser man if he had not accepted the post of Junior Lord of the Treasury, and it was because he was weighted by the sins of the Administration that he lost his seat. The right hon. Gentleman opposite went down to Brighton, and with an eloquence which would have done credit to Demosthenes or Cicero, or the hon. Member for Peterborough, said, as the chosen vessel of the Government, that it would be a snub to the King if Mr. Gerald Loder were not returned. Would the right hon. Gentleman get up and dare to say such a thing in this House? He promised that if Mr. Gerald Loder did not get another seat, the Government would be in as bad a position as Mr. Gerald Loder was to-day.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said that when the late Sir William Harcourt was defeated at Oxford by a large majority the Government did not resign for some years afterwards. If this Government did not now resign, it would merely follow the example set them more than twenty years ago.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said he wished the right hon. Baronet, when he came to reply, would direct his answer to this one point—why did the Government stay in office? The one great question which the Prime Minister declared, at Sheffield, it was his duty to bring before the Government and the country had been rejected and repudiated by this House. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, had now no policy. The Prime Minister would probably come down to the House to-morrow and challenge the Opposition to move a vote of censure upon him and his Government, and state that so long as he had a majority in the House he would not resign. He would make an appeal to those who were his accomplices in evasion and would get an acquittal from them. But the country had declared against him, and one of his own Administration had been rejected by his constituents. Hon. Members were entitled to ask the Patronage Secretary, who knew the temper of the House, whether this was not an occasion for him to tell the Prime Minister that the genuine feeling of the House of Commons was against him and that the time had come for him to resign.

*Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD: In reply to the various Questions put to me I have nothing to add to the speech I made a few minutes after twelve o'clock in moving the adjournment of the House.

Adjourned at five minutes before
One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 6th April, 1905.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Heytesbury sat first in Parliament after the death of his brother.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Leven's Patent Bill [H.L.]. Presented (pursuant to leave given on Tuesday last), and read 1^{a}.

South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Southend and Colchester Light Railways Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Second Reading (which stands appointed for To-morrow) put off to Monday next.

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Torpoint Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill. Read 2^{a}, and committed.

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill. Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Accrington Corporation Bill; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; South Suburban Gas Bill; Wrexham Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the councils of the county boroughs of Liverpool and Manchester, the county of Surrey, and the urban district of Willesden, to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Was presented by the Lord President (*E. Vane* (M. Londonderry)); read 1^{a}; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 41.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill. Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].

Petitions in favour of; of residents in Liverpool (13); Swansea; Manchester; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and Birmingham. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petitions for early closing of; of West London Band of Hope Union; and Cumberland Congregational Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Militia Training Return, 1904.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (PAINT AND COLOUR WORKS).

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by T. M. Legge, Esq., M.D., His Majesty's Medical Inspector of Factories, on the manufacture of paints and colours containing lead, as affecting the health of the operatives employed.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report and tables for the year 1904.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3335. China (Teng Yueh); No. 3336. France (Nantes).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account up to 31st March, 1905.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881.

Order in Council, date d1st April, 1905, adding Wicklow to the ports at which explosives may be landed.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX).

Order, made by the County Council of the County of Middlesex, re-arranging the polling districts in the Uxbridge Parliamentary Division.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL. [H.L.].

LORD **BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH**: My Lords, I desire to ask the indulgence of the House for a moment to give notice that I propose to-morrow to take the Committee stage on the Advertisements Bill which the House was good enough to read a second time on my Motion a week or two ago. At the conclusion of the debate on that occasion the noble Lord who represents the Home Office intimated that the Home Office had some Amendments to propose to the Bill, and I also indicated that some bodies interested in the advertising trade had approached me with a view of getting some modifications made in the Bill. Both these negotiations have had some success, and with the consent of the House I propose to take the Committee stage *pro forma* to-morrow to insert these Amendments, and when the Bill is reprinted I propose that it should be recommitted to be dealt with in the ordinary way. As the Amendments are rather numerous, I am sure this procedure will be for the convenience of the House.

House to be in Committee to-morrow.

SERVICE OF MILITIAMEN BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3a."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

*THE EARL OF **WEMYSS**: My Lords, I ventured to oppose this Bill on the Second Reading. I am content to say "Not Content." It is no use fighting it any further now, because the Government are so strong in themselves, twenty in number, and have such a docile following, that they can do anything, and in this particular measure they have a splendid reserve in the colonels of Militia who sit in your Lordships' House, who all favour entirely altering the conditions and character of the service to which they belong. They expect it will add to their prestige. I hope it will, but I very much doubt it. When I called attention to my main objections to this Bill on the last occasion not having the right to reply I could not deal with the points raised by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War, but the noble Earl quite failed to touch the three objections I ventured to urge against this Bill. My first objection to the Bill is that it upsets the foundation of our military system. The noble Earl cannot deny it. That is accepted. In the second place, it will render difficult, if it does not take away, the power of the Crown to compel service for home defence. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed us that the Government had been informed by their legal advisers that this Bill would not take that power away. I do not say it will, but I say that if you have an Act giving you power to compulsorily send militiamen to any part of the world, you cannot apply that to Militiamen raised compulsorily. You cannot possibly so treat British subjects and send them to any part of the world compulsorily. My third point was this, that all you want to do by this Bill can be done voluntarily, and has so been done for a hundred years. Militiamen when asked to volunteer for foreign service do so most readily.

We were met on this point by my noble and gallant friend Lord Raglan, a colonel of Militia, who said that this was a most immoral proceeding. I own that for my own part I cannot see anything immoral in asking these men to volunteer for foreign service. I entirely deny the immorality; but, if there is immorality, it is continued in this Bill. For what does the Bill propose? The second clause proposes that the Act shall not apply to any Militiamen who is raised otherwise than by voluntary service, nor, without his consent, to any Militia officer commissioned or to any Militiamen enlisted before the passing of this Act. That means that before you can force these men under this Act to serve anywhere and everywhere you must ask each one individually whether he will or will not continue to serve under these new conditions. If there has been any immorality in asking them hitherto, surely that immorality is continued under this Bill, and my noble friend Lord Raglan by supporting it has plunged over head and ears—and that in his case is saying a good deal—into the sea of immorality on which it floats.

I would make a suggestion to my noble friend, and one which appears to me, both as regards the Militia and the Volunteers, to meet all that is required. I should be perfectly satisfied with it myself. It would leave things alone. I suggest that the title of the Bill, which is now "Service of Militiamen Bill," should be altered to read "Foreign Service of Militiamen Bill." Let it apply only to foreign service, and let the present service remain exactly as it is. The foundation of your military system would still hold good, and you would get what you wanted. I read in a paper to-day an article headed "The real *role* of the Volunteer." What, according to this writer, was the real *role* of the Volunteer? Why, foreign service. That is absurd in view of the doctrine of the blue-water school. I hope after Easter to ask your Lordships to pass a very simple and common-sense Resolution expressing your opinion on the wild, unsustainable theory that you are to trust only to your Navy, and not have any defensive forces at all. When the Volunteers volunteered for service in South Africa my regiment, the London Scottish, sent two companies. I took no part in that and did not go to see them off. Why? Because I thought it was wrong to accept Volunteers actually serving under the existing Volunteer Act for South Africa or anywhere else, thus having in the same force two kinds of Volunteers, the "go and fights" and the "stay at homes." My feeling was that before they were allowed to volunteer for service in South Africa they should resign their position as Volunteers. I have made these few remarks, my Lords, not in a spirit of hostility to the Government in this matter, though a great deal might be said against them for the way in which they are treating the Army, but in order to submit this humble suggestion, which I think would be ac ommon-sense way out of the difficulty.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (The Earl of Donoughmore): My Lords, The noble Earl opposite has taken me to task for not having replied fully to his arguments on the occasion on which we discussed this Bill on Second Reading. The first reason why I did not do so was that the greater part of the remarks I had the privilege of addressing to your Lordships on that occasion were made before the noble Earl delivered his speech.

*The Earl of WEMYSS: But you replied.

*The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: Yes, I did reply; and I did not deal then with the arguments of the noble Earl because I thought they had been fully dealt with by my noble friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and by the colonels of Militia who addressed your Lordships on that occasion. The noble Earl states that we are absolutely doing away with the power of the Crown to compel service for home defence. He argues that whereas we have previously been able to raise men for the Militia by compulsion, we shall not be able to do so in future, because it would be immoral to raise men by compulsion and send them on foreign service. I agree with the noble Earl in that. I do not object to the word "dishonest" being used in that connection. It has been considered necessary in the past to raise men by compulsion for home defence, and if it is necessary to do that in the future it can still be done in spite of this Bill. The noble Earl referred to the use by my noble friend Lord Raglan of the word immoral. We consider that it is not right to enlist men for one purpose when you know you will have to ask them afterwards to serve for another. As regards the section quoted by the noble Earl from the Bill now before the House, and which he mentions as immoral, I would point out that it is merely a provisional arrangement to safeguard the rights of those who are at present in the Militia, and I think it would have been immoral if we had not put it in, if we had calmly passed an Act providing that men who had enlisted under totally different conditions were to be liable in future for foreign service. With regard to the scheme which the noble Earl outlined, I can promise him that it will not be lost sight of. I will bring it to the notice of the Secretary of State for War, but I can give no pledge that it will be introduced into this Bill.

On Question, Bill read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Lord NEWTON rose to move to resolve "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider the advisability of carrying into effect the Resolution relating to Public Business passed by this House on May 25th, 1903." He said: My Lords, I feel that some apology is due to the House from me for again dragging before it this well-worn subject, but I have observed by experience that it very seldom happens that anybody obtains anything until he has become an intolerable bore, and I must plead that as my excuse at the present moment. At all events, I can assure the House that I do not intend to detain it at any length. The unsatisfactory conduct of business in this House has formed the subject of frequent discussions, or, perhaps, it would be more correct to describe them as frequent grumbles, and these discussions have almost invariably terminated without any tangible result. The result of these debates may, as a rule, be appropriately summed up in those pregnant words with which we are so familiar in this House—namely, that "the subject then dropped." Although, as I say, these discussions have not produced much result, they have, at all events, shown that there is what I may term a healthy spirit of discontent prevailing in this House, chiefly among unofficial Members, as to the state of public business; and when on July 29th, last year, the Government airily announced that the Finance Bill, which was introduced in this House at 3 p.m., had to be passed through all its stages by 5.30 p.m., the worm—I might almost say the noble worm—turned, and noble Lords opposite, throwing themselves into the breach, performed the unprecedented feat of talking the Bill out. In some quarters this is not regarded as a very remarkable achievement. In another place it could be done, figuratively speaking, by perhaps one or two Members without turning a hair; but I myself have always felt that a certain amount of gratitude was due to noble Lords opposite for their attitude on this particular occasion. It not only showed that they were keenly alive to the rights and privileges of this House, but it was a distinct gratification to me to realise that under certain conditions a spirit of obstruction could, if necessary, be invoked even in this Assembly.

Any feelings of dissatisfaction which may prevail in this House as to the way in which we are treated are not likely to be assuaged by the Return which my noble and learned friend, Lord James of Hereford, has just secured. I will quote a few gems from this Return, which is eloquent by reason of its simplicity. I will go no further back than the year 1901. The Factory and Workshops Bill, which was presented in the House of Commons on March 28th, did not reach this House until August 14th, on the same day as the Youthful Offenders Bill, which was introduced on June 20th. In 1902 the Licensing Bill, which was submitted to the Lower House on January 30th, was not read a first time in the House of Lords until July; and in 1903 we had to wait until nearly the end of July before we were called upon to deal with the Irish Land Bill, the principal measure of the session, and the London Education Bill, which were introduced in the House of Commons in March and April respectively. Last year the Licensing Bill was only sent up to the Lords on July 29th, while the Education (Local Authority Default) Bill and the Shop Hours Bill, which originated in the Commons in April, were received by this House on August 10th and 11th respectively. Then there was the particular instance of the Finance Bill of last session. I will cheerfully admit, my Lords, that some improvement is manifest this year, because two Bills of some importance have already been introduced in this House; but I am afraid that this improvement can only be characterised as an act of somewhat tardy—I might almost say deathbed repentance on the part of the Government. Whether that is so or not, I would ask the House to consider what are likely to be our prospects supposing another Government comes into power before long.

I observed just now that the result of these discussions had almost invariably been absolutely fruitless, but there is one particular exception, an exception which I am proud to think was due to my own efforts. In 1903 I induced the House to pass a Resolution concerning business in the House. It was carried by a large majority, and ever since I achieved this triumph I have been inquiring meekly, but persistently, as to whether any steps would ever be taken to carry this Resolution into effect. The answers I have received have invariably been extremely sympathetic, but they have not been productive of any solid results, and I candidly admit I am rather tired of these professions of sympathy, and I now invite the House to take action. This is a matter which does not affect the Government or the two Front Benches. The noble Marquess the Leader of the House not very long ago said—

> "I can assure your Lordships that we do feel that this is not a question between the two Front Benches, but a question concerning, in the first place, the interests of the public in seeing that legislation is properly conducted, and, in the next place, those in this House whose dignity and reputation are involved."

Everybody—and I should be the first to admit it—is perfectly aware of the fact that the noble Marquess has the interests and the dignity of this House at heart, and I have not the smallest doubt that he was absolutely sincere in the expressions of which he made use, but at the same time I should like to point on that all Governments are very much alike, and all Governments are human. What, after all, is the object of a Government. The object of a Government is not to have Bills talked about, but to have them passed. If I were a Minister and happened to be in charge of a Bill—my feeling would be that the less my Bill was talked about the better chance there would be of its passing, and I should like to wait till the last moment, and carry it, if possible, by merely raising my hat. Therefore, supposing the noble Marquess the Leader of this House went to the Prime Minister in the House of Commons and said—"Now, look here, there are some troublesome people in the Lords who are worrying me about the state of business; what is to be done?" I can imagine the Prime Minister replying—"What an unreasonable lot of men you Lords are. Here are we in the House of Commons saturated with talk, and here you propose the same sort of thing in your House, where things are supposed to be conducted in a businesslike manner. Tell your friends you sympathise with what they desire, but see great difficulty in carrying that desire out." It is clear that the interest of the Front Bench and of the official personages is not as great as the interest of unofficial personages. The remedy, therefore, does not lie with this Government or with any Government, but with the House itself.

There are two remedies before you on the Paper to-day. One is my own, and the other is proposed by Lord James of Hereford. I cannot help thinking that Lord James has taken to heart the advice given by my noble friend on the Cross Benches, Lord Rosebery, when a year or two ago he complained that this House was treated, to use his own expression, as a "dust heap," and urged that we should go on strike. That is practically the effect of the suggestion made by my noble and learned friend, Lord James. I admit at once that, morally and logically, there is absolutely nothing to be said against my noble and learned friend's proposal; but I confess I have some doubts as to whether it is tactically sound. This Resolution might be passed and it might be disregarded by the House of Commons, and where should we be then? Personally, I am of an extremely conciliatory disposition, and am anxious to appoach this question in a peaceful way, and my own plan is that we should pass a Resolution in favour of a Joint Committee of both Houses to consider the question. I urge it upon two grounds. In the first place, it seems to me that there is nothing more futile than to pass Resolutions and take no steps whatever to carry them out. We might just as well talk in our sleep, for all the good we do, if we pass Resolutions and never take any notice of them. The second advantage which I think my plan possesses is that at all events it is an amicable invitation to the Commons to talk this matter over with us and endeavour to come to an understanding. If they refuse the olive branch, then it will be for this House to adopt my noble and learned friend's remedy and pass the drastic Resolution he has placed on the Paper.

With regard to the practicability of my proposal, I know I shall be met, if anybody answers me at all, with the argument that this Resolution is of no value because it only deals with the question of dividing the session into two halves. Whenever I am in want of an argument I am fortunate in being able to quote the noble Marquess the Leader of the House in my favour. The chief argument which was advanced in favour of my proposal to divide the session was that when the month of August arrived, and these Bills came up to us, there was nobody to consider them, and therefore no opportunity for fairly discussing them; but what the noble Marquess said with great justice last year was—

> "The real reason, it seems to me, for a change of this kind is that which my noble friend has stated—I mean the fact that the present system does not enable the House of Lords to perform adequately and efficiently the duties which belong to it under our constitutional system."

I must admit, too, that my object goes rather further than that of Lord James. He is concerned only with the way in which Bills are dealt with by this House. I admit that my ambition soars higher than his. I aspire not only to remedy the procedure of this House, but to induce Parliament some day to adopt the habits of civilised countries, and, instead of following the preposterous practice of legislating in the summer months, do that work in the winter time.

I do not wish to labour this subject any further. These two questions can obviously be considered simultaneously and concurrently by a Joint Committee, and I think I can sum up my arguments better by again quoting the noble Marquess than by adding any comments of my own. In February of last year the noble Marquess the Leader of the House said—

> "I have now for a great number of years watched events in this House, and I am bound to say it seems to me almost a scandal that year after year important matters of business should be crowded before us in the dying moments of the session, when we are all of us more or less exhausted, and when it is quite impossible for this House either to consider, as it should consider, the Amendments which may have been introduced in any measure in the other House of Parliament during the later stages of its progress, or even those Amendments which are put upon the Paper by Members of your Lordships' House. The result, I am afraid, is that a great deal of our legislative work is very badly done, and that we not infrequently place upon the Statute-book, as we certainly did last year in the case of the Irish Land Bill, measures which, in some important respects, do not carry out the intentions of their framers."

I do not think anything I can say will add weight to that declaration, and I submit that it is imperative upon us that we should do something. If we allow things to go on as they are we are deliberately undermining the authority of this House The present House of Commons may be looked upon as a friendly House as regards its feelings to this Assembly. There is no doubt whatever that a large majority of the Members of the House of Commons are distinctly in favour of a Second Chamber. For that reason I would urge this House to lose no time in endeavouring to come to an amicable arrangement with the other House, because it is within the bounds of possibility that before very long we may find a newly-constituted House of Commons which may not be animated by such friendly feelings towards this House. At all events, if we allow ourselves to be considered as insignificant, if we divest ourselves of our rights under the Constitution, it is not very difficult to see what will happen; and I would, therefore, respectfully urge the House to adopt the extremely moderate suggestion I have made and pass the Resolution I now beg to move.

Moved to resolve, "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider the advisability of carrying into effect the Resolution relating to Public Business passed by this House on the 25th of May, 1903."—(*The Lord Newton.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, before your Lordships proceed to take a vote upon the Motion which has just been moved, I should like to point out that the Resolution to which the House agreed in 1903 was to this effect—

> "That in the opinion of this House Parliament ought to rise at the beginning of July, and that the time provided for the due transaction of public business should be provided by Parliament sitting during a longer period of the winter than is customary at present."

I take it that if your Lordships agree to the Motion now moved by the noble Lord, that will practically be the reference which will be made to the Committee. I want to point out to your Lordships that besides the public business of the House there is also the Private Bill business, which is of considerable importance, and I hope that no Committee which may be appointed to consider this matter will neglect that somewhat important branch of the question. I am not going to detain your Lordships now by pointing out the difficulties there may be in the way of altering the dates of the Sittings of this House, but there have to be taken into consideration the long vacation and the habits of all those professional men who practice before the Committees of this House, and I would venture to express the hope that the noble Lord, in considering the reference which may be made to the Committee, if it be appointed, will not confine the consideration of the dates on which the House should meet and adjourn merely to public business, but that he will also take into consideration the necessities of Private Bill business.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I certainly shall not criticise in any hostile spirit the admirable speech which my noble friend on the Back Bench delivered just now to your Lordships. If I had been minded to do so, I should have been deterred, I think, by the fact that he did me the honour of quoting several passages from my own observations on this subject—passages which show that he and I are upon many points entirely in agreement. There was really only one observation in the speech of my noble friend which I would at all criticise. He told your Lordships that experience had taught him that no one ever obtained anything in this House unless he established the reputation of being an intolerable bore. I wish well to my noble friend's cause, and as it is utterly beyond my powers of imagination to conceive that he should ever become an intolerable bore, I venture to hope that he has somewhat misapprehended the situation.

I will not waste your Lordships' time by going over the old ground and dwelling upon the inconvenience to which this House has been put by Bills being brought before it in the expiring moments of the session. There is no difference of opinion on that point, and the Return which my noble and learned friend behind me has obtained has, if any justification was necessary, amply supplied a justification of the complaint which has been made. What we have to consider is what measures are within our reach for remedying a condition of things which we should all of us like to change. Two proposals are before your Lordships—the Motion which has just been moved by my noble friend, and the Motion standing in the name of the noble and learned Lord behind me. If I am not out of order, I should like to say, with regard to Lord James of Hereford's proposal, that while I heartily agree with its purport it does not seem to me to advance matters very far. Lord James proposes to enter a protest and to make a declaration of our intention to refuse to consider any Bills unless sufficient opportunities be afforded for the due deliberation of them. That is an admirable sentiment; but unless my noble and learned friend contemplates some further step with the object of defining what constitutes "sufficient opportunity of due deliberation," we shall be left very much where we are at present. If my noble and learned friend proposes to go further and to ask your Lordships to pass a Standing Order, under which this House would decline to accept any Bills unless they come up from the House of Commons by a certain date, that would, of course, be a practical measure and one which your Lordships might think well to consider. But it would be open to this objection, that it would bring us to a deadlock, and instead of having imperfect opportunities of discussing Bills, we might have no Bills at all to discuss.

I pass to the Motion which is really before the House. The proposal of my noble friend on the Back Bench is that a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament should be appointed for the purpose of examining the Resolution passed by your Lordships in 1903 on this subject. That is, I am bound to say, a very attractive proposal, because the matter is one which certainly concerns both Houses of Parliament; and unless the co-operation of both Houses can be obtained we shall not make very much progress. I have, however, made it my business to inquire as to the possibility of obtaining such a Joint Committee of inquiry as my noble friend desires, and I regret to tell him that the best information I can obtain is that in the present condition of public business in the other House of Parliament there is no probability at all that a Motion for a Joint Committee could be put forward with any prospect of success. The subject is obviously a very controversial one. It would afford ample opportunities for debate; and I am afraid we cannot look forward to such opportunities being supplied, at any rate during the present session of Parliament.

We have to remember that this subject is not a new one, and that it is one as to which the other House has on numerous occasions manifested a very close and jealous interest. I find that there have been no less than four Parliamentary Committees, I do not say dealing with the precise proposal made by my noble friend, but dealing with analagous proposals. There was a Committee in 1848 to consider a proposal that either House should be allowed by Resolution to adjourn the discussion of Bills to a subsequent session. The Committee reported adversely upon that proposal. In 1861 there was another Committee, and the decision was again adverse; and in 1869 a Committee was appointed to consider a proposal which originated with the late Lord Salisbury and which has a very important bearing upon the matter now before the House. The Committee had before it a Bill introduced in this House by the late Lord Salisbury, entitled "An Act to facilitate proceedings of Bills in Parliament," the principal object of which was to enable either House of Parliament to resume in a subsequent session proceedings on Bills which there had not been sufficient time to adequately consider in the previous session, the desire being to provide for "a due supply of Bills to be submitted for the consideration of the House of Lords early in the session, avoiding groups of Bills at a later period and spreading the legislative business more equally over the session in both Houses." The Committee, I find, admitted, though with some qualification, the existence of the evil it was proposed to remedy, but no practical proposal resulted from their investigations.

In 1890 there was another Committee, the Report of which was drafted by the present Prime Minister and carried by a narrow majority. That Committee was the only one which produced a practical proposal—that proposal being that there should be a new Standing Order providing for the suspension of Bills partly discussed in the House of Commons and for their resumption in the following session at the point where the discussion of the previous session had left off. The object was explained to be that Parliament should be relieved of the need of repeating in two successive sessions the same debate on the same question. It may interest your Lordships to know that, although the Committee accepted these proposals and embodied them in its Report, it did so with the special reservation that the change should apply only to Bills originating in the House of Commons, suspended in that House, and revived there in a subsequent session, but that it should not extend to Bills originated in one House and subsequently revived in another. I mention this to show your Lordships how jealously the House of Commons has guarded its privileges in this matter, and how extremely difficult it would be to obtain from that House a hurried acquiescence in such a proposal as that submitted by my noble friend.

If your Lordships will permit me to indicate what in my opinion might be a convenient way of dealing with the Motions before you, I would venture to make this suggestion. If my noble and learned friend behind me (Lord James) presses his Motion we shall certainly vote for it, for we desire to affirm the principle which that Motion emphasises; but as to the Motion of my noble friend on the Back Bench, feeling, as we do, that there is no prospect whatever of obtaining the appointment of a Joint Committee of the two Houses, we suggest that the best course would be that your Lordships should appoint a Committee of this House with the object of, at any rate, clearing our own minds and deciding which of the different remedies before us we desire to press upon Parliament—I say which of the different remedies, because your Lordships will recollect that more than one proposal has been made in different parts of the House for dealing with this question. My noble friend himself, I remember, at one moment offered us two alternative schemes. Under one of them the session was to begin in November and be carried on until the autumn of the next year, and under the other the session was to begin in January, the House of Lords session was to be broken off in July, and then there was to be an autumn session to complete the business. So that there are two proposals from the noble Lord himself.

I remember that my noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh made another proposal, under which the consideration of Bills suspended in one session would be resumed in another. Besides that there have been various minor suggestions, such as beginning the session earlier in the year, and introducing more Bills into this House. With regard to the latter suggestion I was glad the noble Lord admitted that some little improvement had taken place in that direction by the introduction in your Lordships' House of at least two important Bills before Easter this year. I cannot help thinking under these circumstances that a House of Lords Committee could usefully undertake the investigation of this question, and, I am tempted to add, though I do so with many reservations and with bated breath, that it seems to me not inconceivable that such a Committee might find some means of obtaining authoritative evidence as to the manner in which proposals of this kind were regarded by high authorities in the other House. I do not know that such a Committee will thoroughly content those who desire to go the full length which my noble friend desires to go, but it does seem to me that it would be at any rate a step in the right direction, and would place your Lordships in possession of conclusions which would form a useful basis for any further efforts in the same direction.

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, I share with the noble Marquess who has just sat down admiration of the speech of the noble Lord who moved the Motion now before us. His speeches always interest the House, and he cannot be accused of being in any degree a bore. I have voted several times on this question, and have always voted against the noble Lord, for, though I entirely share his desire, I have always realised that there were difficulties in the way, such as those put forward by the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees and others. Besides, I have felt that if we were expected to meet always in the autumn, then, instead of having a shorter session, we should have a very much longer session, for we should have the same length session as we have now with the autumn session added. It is, however, not simply a question for this House; it is a question which belongs more to the other House. I quite admit that this House has very strong reasons to complain of the sending up to it of Bills very late in the session, but our remedy does not consist in merely refusing to go on with those measures. That would be an impossible position for this House to take up. I believe that the responsibility for difficulties of this kind rests more on the Government of the day and the Leader of the other House than with anybody else.

Take this session. We met unusually late. If we had met earlier, there would have been more prospect of our having Bills brought before us in good time. I have more than once strongly complained of finance measures being brought up to this House at a late period of the session, and of our being obliged to pass them through all their stages on the one night. This House, of course, has no right to alter a money Bill, but it has the right to criticise and to refuse to pass a Money Bill. Finance Bills have not always been introduced at so late a period in the session. I instanced last year a great many cases where they had been brought up at a much earlier time, and the House had had every opportunity of fully considering them in their separate stages. It is, therefore, in the hands of the Government to help forward measures and bring them up to this House at an earlier period.

The noble Lord's proposal is that there should be a Joint Committee of both Houses to consider what should be done to forward the views he has at heart, but the answer given by the noble Marquess the Leader of the House is conclusive. The other House, I am afraid, would not join in a Committee to carry this out. We now have another proposal made by the noble Marquess himself, that we should have a Committee of this House to sift the different views and proposals to meet this difficulty.

If the noble Marquess proposes that, I should not oppose it, but I am afraid it will lead to very little. We shall have the same difficulty with regard to the other House, and it would be impossible for this House to go on with this matter unless it were acting in co-operation with the other House. In the circumstances, if the noble Marquess proposes that Committee, I shall not think it my duty to oppose his proposal, but I am afraid it will not lead to any very practical result. With regard to the proposal made by the noble Lord, which, of course, does meet the difficulty I have mentioned by having a Joint Committee, I think the answer which the noble Marquess has given is conclusive against its being adopted.

Lord JAMES of HEREFORD, who had given notice to move to resolve, "That this House, recognising its duties as a deliberative Assembly, protests against the practice of introducing Bills into it under conditions which afford insufficient time for their consideration, and declares its intention to refuse to consider any Bill unless sufficient opportunity be afforded for due deliberation thereon," said: My Lords, I feel that with regard to the Motion standing in my name on the Paper I am placed in a position of some difficulty. I do not know whether the House wishes to dispose of my noble friend's Motion first, or allow me to explain at this stage why I wish my Motion to be carried. I will state, as briefly as I can, the reasons why I move my Motion—that is, if it will be regular for me to discuss my Motion on the Motion now before the House.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I am afraid it would not be regular for the noble and learned Lord to do that. As to the suggestion made by the noble Marquess the Leader of the House, I think it would be quite possible, if the noble Lord (Lord Newton) desired it, to amend his Motion by striking out the words "joint" and "both" and the letter "s" in Houses, and substituting the word "this" for "both."

Lord NEWTON: My Lords, whilst I recognise the conciliatory tone of the noble Marquess's observations, I cannot follow his reasoning. If we appoint a Committee, what are we going to inquire into? We have been complaining of our treatment for a long time. What, therefore, is there to discover? If we appointed a Committee of this House, I presume we should only examine Members and officials of the House. How would that advance our case? What I have endeavoured to make clear is that this is a question which does not concern the Government but concerns this House and the House of Commons, and if we inquire into it till doomsday that is no reason why it should make any impression on the House of Commons. We have stated our case and come to a decision upon it by passing a Resolution, and, therefore, with all deference to the noble Marquess, I feel myself unable to take his advice. I shall press my Motion to a division.

On Question, their Lordships divided. Contents, 8; Not-Contents, 70.

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Colville of Culross, V.
Falkland, V.
Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
Goschen, V.
Hill, V.
Hutchinson, V. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
Llandaff, V.

Abinger, L.
Alington, L.
Allerton, L.
Alverstone, L.
Avebury, L.
Barnard, L.
Belper, L.
Chaworth, L. (*E. Meath.*)
Colchester, L.
Coleridge, L.
Dunboyne, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Farrer, L.

Harris, L.
Hylton, L.
Killanin, L.
Kilmarnock, L. (*E. Erroll.*)
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Knollys, L.
Lilford, L.
Monkswell, L.
Northbourne, L.
Ravensworth, L.
Reay, L. [*Teller.*]
Robertson, L.
St. Levan, L.
Saltoun, L.
Shuttleworth, L.
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Sinclair, L.
Stanmore, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Tweedmouth, L.
Tyrone, L. (*M. Waterford.*)
Windsor, L.
Wolverton, L.
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

PUBLIC BILLS.

*Lord JAMES of HEREFORD: My Lords, after the discussion that has taken place I shall occupy a very short time in moving the Motion standing in my name. I feel I ought to make some apology to the House for occupying such a conspicuous position in relation to a matter that affects the House generally, but as no other Member of your Lordships' House had taken the matter up I thought it right to do so. I do not propose to deal with the extent of the evil; your Lordships will see at once that it does exist by a perusal of the Return which has been placed in your hands. My attention was first particularly directed to this great evil by what took place with regard to the Factory Amendment Act of 1901. That was a most important measure, containing very many Amendments of the law with which your Lordships were well able to deal. That Bill came to this House and was read a first time on August 14th; it was read a second time on August 15th, the Committee stage and Third Reading being taken and the Bill also receiving the Royal Assent on the same day. When the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Rochester asked for the consideration of an important question — namely, whether laundries should be dealt with in the Bill, we were told by the noble Lord in charge of the measure that if it was amended in the smallest degree by your Lordships the Bill could not become law, as want of time would prevent its being passed by the House of Commons. It may be within the recollection of noble Lords present that objection was also taken by the most rev. Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury, by Lord Rosebery, and others, and on behalf of the Government we had to implore those noble Lords not to exercise their right of criticising the Bill, because, if they did, the punishment would fall on the factory operatives by the Bill not becoming law, and not on the Government. Fortunately, they gave way and allowed the Bill to pass, but it was understood that some remedy should be found for this difficulty. In consequence of what occurred, I consulted the late Lord Salisbury, who was then at the head of the Government, and no one could have been more sympathetic than he was in the expression of his hope that some remedy would be found.

¶Then there was the case of a Bill which came before this House on several occasions—the Friendly Societies (Outdoor Relief) Bill. That measure involved a great principle in the administration of the Poor Law. It came before us in the years 1901 and 1903, and again last year. I was an ardent supporter of the Bill, but there were very strong arguments used against it. The late Lord Northbrook gave reasons why it should not be passed, and the noble Viscount beside me, Lord Goschen, speaking as a political economist, also attacked it very strongly. The most rev. Primate, too, stated objections to the Bill. That Bill was fully considered in this House on July 11th, 1901; sixty-six Members voted against it and thirty-nine for it. In 1903 it again came before the House. I moved the Second Reading, and the Bill was rejected, after full discussion, by fifty-nine votes to fifty. There had, therefore, been a deliberate expression of the opinion of this House on two occasions. Last year the Bill came up again to this House as late as August 12th. The Government had determined that it should pass, and the following day it was read a second time; the voting being thirty-nine for the Second Reading whilst only nine Members of the House were left to say "Not Content"; the Committee stage was negatived and it was read a third time on the 15th, and received the Royal Assent on that day. In consequence of its being brought up at that late period of the session and rushed through its various stages a majority was thus obtained for a Bill which had twice been rejected when adequate opportunity was given for its discussion.

It may be said that the answer is that Members ought to remain in attendance. I can only say, for my own part, I purposely stayed away on that occasion, for although I much desired that the Bill should become law I felt that if the House passed the Bill in those circumstances an exorbitant price was being paid for it. It is said that we ought to sacrifice ourselves and remain till the prorogation. I quite agree that we should do so if there is any necessity for the sacrifice. But I object to Members of the House of Commons expecting us to do the hard work while they are disporting themselves elsewhere. I would ask your Lordships to consider what occurred at the end of last session, when the evil reached a stage almost past endurance. On August 12th the House of Commons sent up a packed parcel of Bills, including the Wireless Telegraphy Bill, the Prisons (Scotland) Bill, the Bishoprics of Southwark and Birmingham Bill, the Anglo-French Convention Bill, and other measures. Those Bills were read a second time upon August 13th; Sunday intervened, and on the 15th the Committee stage was negatived, and they were all read a third time, no opportunity whatever being given of debating them. It is agreed, I think, that something must be done. The noble Marquess asked whether we could accept a binding Standing Order. In one sense I would be prepared to accept it, but I do not think the House could do so. We cannot make our Standing Orders irrevocable; we cannot take away from ourselves the power of suspending a Standing Order. What, then, is to be done? I do not think we can have a perfect remedy or define a positive rule, but I do think we should give notice to the House of Commons of our feeling on this subject. If we do nothing, what has occurred in past years will occur again. If we were to lay down a rule that we would never receive a Bill after a certain date we might find ourselves in a considerable difficulty.

I have no doubt that it is the personal characteristic of your Lordships to exhibit the virtue of suffering in silence any injury offered to you; but you have your duties as a deliberative Assembly, and have also to consider the interests of the public. It is desirable to give the House of Commons notice by a formal Resolution, not by way of attack on that House, but as an intimation that we cannot accept Bills when there is no opportunity of our fulfilling the public duty cast upon us. I hope it will not be regarded that this is anything approaching a demonstration against the House of Commons or those who have charge of public business. We all recognise how great is the difficulty of Ministers in arranging business, but surely we are not asking too much when we ask that some consideration should be shown to us in this matter. If my noble friend the Leader of the House offers a Committee to consider this question as a whole there can be no wish to press the Motion, but what I seek is a practical and sufficient remedy for the evil.

Moved to resolve, "That this House, recognising its duties as a deliberative Assembly, protests against the practice of introducing Bills into it under conditions which afford insufficient time for their consideration, and declares its intention to refuse to consider any Bill unless sufficient opportunity be afforded for due deliberation thereon."—(*The Lord James of Hereford.*

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, I largely share the views held by the noble and learned Lord on this subject, but when I examine his Motion, I think it is too crude and not sufficiently explicit. The noble and learned Lord says we can refuse a Bill when we have not sufficient opportunity for due deliberation upon it. Ought not some notice to be given to the House of Commons as to when a Bill can come up and when it cannot? I feel that the words in the Motion as it stands are too vague to be of any practical effect. I therefore prefer the proposal of the noble Marquess to refer the matter to a Committee rather than pass a general Resolution which, as far as I can see, must be, and cannot avoid being, exceedingly vague.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: My Lords, I could not vote for the Motion which my noble friend on the Back Benches introduced in such an admirable speech. To have voted against him would not have been consonant with my feeling of admiration for his speech, and therefore I was compelled to take the pusillanimous course of retiring to the steps of the Throne. I could not vote for his Motion after the noble Marquess's intimation that even if your Lordships passed the Motion for the nomination of a Committee, those responsible for the business of the House of Commons would not undertake to make a corresponding Motion there, and therefore we should be in the position of exposing ourselves in too Christian a manner to an obvious buffet from the other House. It is no disparagement to the noble Marquess to say that the suggestion he made came with a strangely familiar ring. It was the peroration I expected from his speech, and perhaps the only peroration possible to one speaking in his position. The proposal of a Select Committee on a question of this kind is the natural method of painless extinction for any public movement of an abstract nature. It is perfectly obvious to the noble Marquess and all your Lordships that a Select Committee will end in nothing. There will be a Report mentioning what is obvious and well known, reciting the facts only too familiar to those who have sat in the House as long as I have, and then the question will drop until with the return of spring my noble friend opposite rises in his place again.

I have not risen to call attention to these notorious facts, but rather for the purpose of indicating a certain danger incident to the Motion of my noble and learned friend, which I think has not escaped the notice of my noble friends on the Front Opposition Bench, though delicacy may have sealed their lips. We have now lived ten years under the beneficent rule of noble Lords opposite. During that period we have borne our souls in patience in circumstances which have been recited with almost agonising eloquence by my noble and learned friend. We have taken in the middle of August, at the end of August, at the beginning of August, at a time when our souls were yearning for other things, whatever measures it pleased His Majesty's Government to hand to us in a more or less contemptuous manner. So have we done; so have we borne; so have we endured. Let me remind my noble and learned friend that in his recital of what took place in regard to the Bill to which the most rev. Primate and myself took some objection he did not tell the whole story. If there had been a quorum furnished by the Government on that occasion the efforts of the most rev. Primate and myself would have been entirely futile. That is an integral part of the case which I think he ought not to have omitted.

Lord JAMES of HEREFORD: The fact that there were not thirty Members present left the whole matter in the power of the noble Earl and the most rev. Primate, and we were, therefore, under a great debt of gratitude to them for not persisting in their objection.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: It is very kind of my noble and learned friend to say so. I confess I may have rejoiced for the five minutes in my life in which I enjoyed power in this House, but whether that be so or not, the incident stamped itself in a lively way on my memory, and I remember that the leading members of the Government, from the Prime Minister downwards, failed to take that interest in our legislation which would have been shown by their attendance on that occasion. Let me return to my point. We have now been ten years under a Conservative Government. There are indications of all kinds—some even come from fashionable watering places—that within no distant time noble Lords behind me and those on the Front Bench opposite may change places. Supposing that by this time next year my noble friends behind me occupy the bench opposite, this somewhat tardy recognition of the rights of the House of Lords may be used against them, and therefore this Motion has, to some extent, the look of furbishing up a weapon which has not been thought of for the last ten years, in preparation for a change of Government. I only indicate this. I enter a *caveat* on behalf of my noble friends behind me that when they bring forward Motions at the end of August, as it is quite possible they may do, this Motion may not be cited as an absolute bar or obstacle to their proceeding with them in the usual way. My noble friend behind me said there was a vagueness about the Motion which was not quite fair to the House of Commons, and that he would like more precision of date attached to it. I do not think that was a very astute suggestion on his part. I think it would be better to leave it in the region of the vague. There is a close time for game; and if it were intimated that there was a close time for Bills coming up from the House of Commons, it might bring your Lordships' House into violent conflict with the other House, which I am sure the Motion is not intended to produce. If I might close my remarks in the words of common sense, I would say, "Do not fix your dates too closely, but, on the other hand, if the situation should change in this House, do not press the Motion with cruel rigidity against my noble friends behind me."

Viscount GOSCHEN: My Lords, I was rising, when my noble friend Lord Rosebery went to the Table, also with the political situation in my mind, but, if I may say so, from the very opposite point of view. I think I may, in the first instance, say, being in the confidence of my noble and learned friend Lord James, that I never for one moment had reason to believe, nor do I now believe, that this Motion was brought forward by him in the slightest degree with a view to a possible change of Government this year or next year. I think

I can give that assurance to your Lordships. The very fact that it is possible that there may by and by be a change of Government, should induce us before that change comes to give an earnest of that by adopting the Resolution and acting upon it, while there is still time, in order to show that there is no Party spirit whatever in the matter. I think it would be a misfortune for your Lordships' House if, during the reign of the Conservatives, hasty legislation at the end of the session is attempted and passed, and then, the moment a change takes place in the Government, when the Government no longer has a majority in this House, we take what Lord Rosebery has described as the cruel course of refusing to pass Bills so sent up to us. I am sure that whatever your Lordships' wishes may be with reference to legislation, you would not desire that the procedure when one Party is in power should be different from the procedure when another Party is in power. It is precisely from that point of view that I should like to see the noble Marquess the Leader of the House armed, if I may say so, with this Resolution. It is, as has been said, somewhat vague. It cannot be precise, because it is impossible to apply the same principle to Bills of varied importance. Therefore I think some vagueness is necessary; but if this Resolution is passed it appears to me that the Leader of your Lordships' House will have a weapon in his hands which he can and ought to produce to the Cabinet in order to warn them in time that if Bills are brought up without sufficient time for discussion, such Bills will be at all events considered from the point of view of rejecting them unless time had been given. I think it is strengthening the hands of the Leader of the House to pass a Resolution of this kind, and I am glad to hear from him that he proposes to allow it to pass. When it is passed I do trust, in the interests of this House, that he will do his utmost, in conjunction with his colleagues, to prevent the repetition of the practice of bringing up Bills of importance to this House at the last moment when there is absolutely no time for their consideration.

The LORD ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY: My Lords, I should like to say a single word in support of the Resolution moved by the noble and learned Lord behind me. It seems to me that argument by word of mouth is scarcely necessary, in view of the document which is in the hands of your Lordships, and which was obtained on the Motion of the noble and learned Lord. It so happens that I have been one of the foremost sufferers in the legislation of the last few years as regards Bills in which I have taken considerable personal interest, representing very much wider interests outside. I have been absolutely precluded from giving expression to those outside views at all, for the reason which the noble and learned Lord has stated. It was his own eloquence, on one memorable occasion to which reference has been made, that induced us, sorely against the grain, to refrain from pressing points which seemed to us to be of paramount importance. I venture to think that the vagueness which has been commented upon as characteristic of the noble and learned Lord's Motion is essential to the practical working of the Motion. If it were more specific and definite it would prove unworkable in practice, but with the elasticity that belongs to its wording as it stands it seems to me it could be used in order to bring pressure elsewhere, and for that reason I welcome its vagueness. It would not leave us absolutely compelled to reject a particular measure, but would justify us, in any case when a measure did not come forward in sufficient time, in showing on what grounds we felt it impossible to go on year by year with the farce of giving Bills to the world with the imprint upon them that they were passed "with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal," when that advice in many instances was markedly wanting.

*The MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, the noble Earl on the Cross Benches detected in this Motion some profound machination on the part of those on the Front Bench, a machination not untainted, I think he said, with a particular kind of opportunism; but let me remind the House that neither of these Motions originated with the Front Bench. We had no concern in their preparation. The noble Earl opposite asked me whether

I remained of opinion that a Committee of your Lordships' House might be substituted for that asked for by Lord Newton. I suggested a Committee of your Lordships' House because, knowing that the particular proposal advocated by my noble friend was impossible, I wished to suggest to him what seemed to me to be the next best means of meeting the difficulty, but he has told us distinctly that that proposal does not meet with his concurrence, and, therefore, so far as he is concerned, I do not consider that I am in any way bound by my offer. If that proposal required a further quietus it was given to it by the speech of the noble Earl on the Cross Benches. I therefore do not propose to renew that suggestion. As to the Motion of the noble and learned Lord behind me, I have already stated that in our opinion it is one which we could not do otherwise than accept. Let me once more say this to the House, that the Motion is not made in the interests of Ministers. It is a proposal which, I believe, reflects a very deeply-felt sentiment shared on both sides of the House—felt, not only on the two Front Benches, but by every Member of this House who cares for the dignity and reputation of the House of Lords; and as the Resolution expresses the feeling I have so long myself entertained I shall certainly go with my noble and learned friend into the lobby if we divide.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I am very sorry that my noble friend who has just sat down has abandoned his proposal for a Committee. It is quite possible that the Committee might not have arrived at a very effective result, but it seems to me it would have been much better to have proceeded by a preliminary inquiry before the House adopted the Motion of the noble and learned Lord. That Motion is very likely to be nothing but a *brutum fulmen* It is almost certain—indeed, I would venture to say it is quite certain—that many Bills in each session will be passed in spite of that Resolution, and the Resolution, if it were turned into a Standing Order, would necessarily be suspended. I do not think that is a desirable course for this House to adopt; I do not think that the House should take this step of resorting to a strike for purposes which may in the end prove impossible to carry into effect. We all of us recognise—I ventured last year to say something on the subject myself—the evil that exists, but the foremost mode of remedying that evil is the capable management of affairs in the House of Commons. That is the real solution of the difficulty, and I am very much afraid that you are not likely to have less difficulties this session in the present state of business in that House than we have had before. Therefore, I venture to say that it would be undesirable at this moment to pass a Resolution of this kind, because it is scarcely consistent with the dignity of this House that we should pass a Resolution couched in strong language if we do not intend to adhere to it. Opponents of Bills on either side which come up to this House, if they wish to avoid declaring their real reason for opposing them, will be enabled to put forward this Resolution as their excuse. That again, I think, would be open to objection; and, so far as I can see, we should do much better to abstain from passing a general Resolution of this kind. The discussion which has taken place to-night, and the language used by my noble friend, will give a warning to those who are responsible for the business of the other House of the feeling which exists here, and of the measures which it is possible this House may feel itself ultimately forced to take; but I confess a general Resolution of this kind, involving the assertion that we will not attend to business sent up after a certain date, does not seem to me to be desirable. If it suited the Government and Parliament to put off the prorogation for a certain time, this House would always have the necessary opportunity for discussing Bills before passing them. It is not a question of any physical impossibility of discussing Bills, it is a question of the general convenience of the House; but I do not think we should put this House in a position to enable it to be said that for our own convenience we had refused to consider measures of importance which had been passed after great consideration in the other House.

*The Earl of WEMYSS: My Lords, those of your Lordships who were here on August 11th and 12th of last year will probably recollect what passed at that time. My noble and learned friend Lord James of Hereford has referred to one important Bill—the Out Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill, which drove a great hole through the Poor Law. But there were other Bills before your Lordships' House on August 12th, and when they were brought forward I protested against forcing measures of that kind through by the suspension of the Standing Orders. The first Bill was the Shops Bill, which for the first time in our legislation limited the hours of labour of full-grown men. When the Second Reading was proposed on August 12th I moved the rejection of the Bill and ten Members of this House divided with me against it. They did not go to their grouse guns, but stuck to their guns in this House; and I think their names should be known. They were the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Buccleuch, Earl Grey, Viscount Hood, Lord Armstrong, Lord Balfour, Lord Glenesk, Lord Iveagh, Lord Sherborne, and Lord Stalbridge. Your Lordships will observe that the name of my noble and learned friend opposite is not amongst the number. Had he been there we should have had a round dozen in favour of the sound principle of dealing with these important measures at a proper time when there was adequate opportunity for their consideration. I have no doubt that my noble and learned friend was more agreeably employed elsewhere. My noble and learned friend is a sportsman, and probably on August 12th his name was Macgregor and his foot was on his hired heath. I had drafted in the autumn a Resolution I intended to move this session, declaring that in the opinion of this House it is inconsistent with its dignity and position as a deliberative Assembly that important Bills of a contentious nature should be submitted to it in the last days of the session, and declining in future to consider any such measure after July 15th. That Resolution was more clear and definite than the one now under consideration, and it would have forced the other House to send Bills of a contentious character to this House in time for their adequate consideration. I apologise for having trespassed on your Lordships' time, but I have given you a bit of history of which I thought it was well the House should be reminded.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 6*th April*, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz:—Caledonian Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Great Northern Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

London Gas Bill. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Birmingham Corporation Bill (by Order); Bretwood Gas Bill (by Order); Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill (by Order). As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Cordoba and Rosario Railway Bill [Lords] (by Order); Entre Rios Railways Bill [Lords] (by Order); Malvern Water Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Ealing Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for the suppression of Betting in Streets and other public places." [Street Betting Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to incorporate the Nine Mile Point Railway Company; and for other purposes." [Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to revive and extend the period limited for the compulsory purchase of lands and to extend the period limited for the construction and completion of the harbour and works authorised by The Hastings Harbour Act, 1890, and The Hastings Harbour Act, 1897; and for other purposes." [Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for vesting the undertaking of the Harrow and Uxbridge Railway Company in the Metropolitan Railway Company; to provide for the consolidation of certain preference stocks of the company; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to Dissolve the Marriage of Sir Robert John McConnell, Baronet, of Windsor Avenue, in the county and city of Belfast, with Elsie George McConnell, his now wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other purposes." [McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords.]

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill [Lords]; Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]; McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Ayr; Dundee; and Glasgow (three); to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from South Manchester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL

Petitions against; from Beckenham (four); Brighton; Bromley; Chichester; Hove; Kensington; Lewes (seven); Little Bardfield; Liverpool; Penzance (two); Petersham; Rugby; West Bromwich; and Worthing; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PETTY SESSIONS CLERKS (IRELAND) (SALARIES).

Return [presented March 23rd] to be printed. [No. 115.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (PAINT AND COLOUR WORKS).

Copy presented, of Report by T. M. Legge, esquire, His Majesty's Medical Inspector of Factories, on the Manufacture of Paints and Colours containing Lead, as affecting the health of the operatives employed [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Emigration Statistics of Ireland for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158b]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

CASUALTIES TO SHIPS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered August 9th, 1904; *Mr. Lough*];

to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Copy presented, of the Militia Training Return, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account presented, up to March 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3335 and 3336 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRAMWAYS AND LIGHT RAILWAYS (STREET AND ROAD).

Return ordered, "of Street and Road Tramways and Light Railways authorised by Act or Order, showing the amount of the Capital authorised, paid up, and expended; the length of line authorised and the length open for the public conveyance of passengers down to the 31st day of December, 1904, in respect of Companies, and the 31st day of March, 1905, in respect of Local Authorities; the gross Receipts, working Expenditure, net Receipts, and appropriation of net Receipts; the number of Passengers conveyed, quantity of Electrical Energy used, and the number of miles run by Cars during the year ended on the foregoing dates respectively; together with the number of Horses, Engines, and Cars at those dates (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 310, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return ordered, "of the amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other Public Offices on the 31st day of March, 1905, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 236, of Session 1904):

£2½ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	£2¾ per Cent. War Loan.	Other Securities.	
				Annuities for terms of years.	Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills.

—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Visit of the French Fleet—Facilities for Members of Parliament taking part in the Reception.

Sir THOMAS WRIGHTSON (St. Pancras, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in the event of the visit of the French Fleet to English waters, the Government will give facilities for Members of this House to take part in the reception.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) As the arrangements in regard to the visit of the French Fleet are yet undetermined it is not practicable at present to make any statement in reply to the hon. Member's Question.

Closing of Irish Police Stations.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain what are the reasons for closing the Rathmolyon and Kildalkey police stations; to what barracks have the men been transferred; and if he can state the number of other stations closed, and in what counties, since 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) These stations were abolished because the necessity for them no longer existed. The authorities are satisfied that the requirements of the respective localities can be adequately met by the police at the adjacent stations, of which there are four within a radius of six miles of each of the places named. The police from Kildalkey have been transferred to Ballivor, Athboy, and Crossakiel, the two former being adjacent to Kildalkey; and those from Rathmolyon have been sent to Trim, Enfield, and Dunshaughlin, of which Trim and Enfield adjoin Rathmolyon. The number and situation of the stations closed since 1903 are as follows—

County.	No.
Carlow	1
Cavan	4
Clare	3
Cork, E.R.	6
Cork, W.R.	6
Donegal	5
Down	1
Dublin	2
Galway, E.R.	2
Galway, W.R.	2
Kerry	7
Kildare	5
Kilkenny	2
King's	6
Leitrim	3
Limerick	8
Longford	1
Louth	3
Mayo	4
Meath	11
Monaghan	2
Queen's	2
Roscommon	5
Sligo	5
Tipperary, N.R.	3
Tipperary, S.R.	2
Westmeath	2
Wexford	2
Wicklow	3
Total	108

Fishery Board Cruiser "Freya."

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the amount paid for the Fishery Board cruiser "Freya," her speed and tonnage, and what part of the coast she patrols.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The cost of the "Freya" has been £10,000, her speed is twelve knots, and her tonnage 280. Her districts for patrol vary according to the varying necessities of the service.

Publication of Report of Lord Mansfield's Commission.

MR. LEVESON-GOWER (Sutherland): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he can say when the Report of Lord Mansfield's Commission will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I cannot say exactly on what day the Report will be published.

British and Foreign Sailors employed on British Ships.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state the number of British sailors employed on board British ships each year from 1897 to 1903 or 1904, inclusive, and also the number of foreign sailors employed on board British ships for the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The figures asked for by my hon. friend are given for each year from 1897 to 1903 at page 74 of "Tables showing the progress of British Merchant Shipping," Parliamentary Paper 294. The figures for 1904 are not yet available.

Premiums for Carrying Boy Sailors.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, if it is not possible to give the average yearly payment per boy by a reduction in the light dues for apprentices carried under the scheme of the President of the Board in 1898, he will state the number of apprentices carried under the scheme each year from 1898 to the end of the year 1903, with the payments for each of these years.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The scheme for boy sailors referred to in the Question did not come into force until April 1st, 1899. In the year 1899–1900 the number of boys enrolled was 302 and the payments made were £672 14s. 7d. In 1900–1 the number of boys enrolled was 454 and the payments made were £1,647 3s. 9d. In 1901–2 the number of boys enrolled was 691 and the payments made were £2,861 9s. 11d. In

1902–3 the number of boys enrolled was 783 and the payments made were £3,938 8s. 8d. In 1903–4 the number of boys enrolled was 1,065 and the payments made were £4,533 19s. 3d.

Music Hall "Sketches."

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that a number of persons engaged in those entertainments called sketches have recently been thrown out of employment consequent upon the action of the Theatrical Managers Association; and, if so, whether he will facilitate the introduction of legislation designed to remove the restrictions and conflicting enactments upon the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have no official information on this subject. I regret to say that I cannot recommend that facilities should be given for legislation of the kind suggested.

Coastguard Surgeons in Ireland.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the number of Coastguard surgeons in Ireland; how many hold appointments additional to the Admiralty one; and how many devote themselves exclusively to Admiralty work.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The number of Admiralty surgeons and agents in Ireland is 117. None of these gentlemen are required to devote themselves exclusively to Admiralty work.

Sale of Obsolete Dockyard Chains.

Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the terms of the Order issued in 1894 as to the sale of obsolete close link and rigging chains; and whether he will undertake to have the Order fully enforced to prevent as far as possible the discarded chains being sold in the markets, thus competing unfairly with the manufacturers and workmen engaged in the chain-making industry.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) I am sending the hon. Member a copy of the Orders issued in 1894 as to the disposal of old chain, from which he will see that they were expressly designed to meet the contingency suggested in the second part of the Question. As stated in my reply of March 28th†, there is no reason for assuming that these instructions are not being properly carried out by the dockyard officers, but their attention is being called to the necessity of exercising special care in this matter.

Pay of Ilford Postmen.

Mr. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the postmen in Ilford receive a maximum wage which is 6s. a week less than that paid to the postmen in the adjoining parish of Manor Park, where living is cheaper; and whether he will place the Ilford postmen on the same rate of pay as the postmen in the same street in the parish of Manor Park, namely, at from 19s. to 30s. a week.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware that such is now the case. I will consider any representation the Ilford postmen may desire to make to me respecting their pay; but I can hold out no hope that their present maximum of 24s. will be raised to 30s. a week.

London Postal Porters.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General what steps he intends to take with a view to removing the three years bar at present imposed on the London postal porters; whether he intends to bring their starting pay to the same level as that of a postman entering the postal service at the age of twenty-five years or over, seeing that the porters are employed, with a few exceptions, only in town district offices where the minimum wage for postmen is 20s.; and whether he intends to allow established labourers in London to rise to the same maximum as the unestablished porters, viz., 30s. weekly.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I will consider any representations the classes to whom the hon. Member refers may desire to make to me respecting their pay, but I may at once say that I am of opinion that 24s. a week is adequate remuneration for the work performed by the labourers.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 1358.

Memorial of Assistant Clerks (Abstractor Class).

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can now state when a reply is likely to be given to the memorial which the assistant clerks (Abstractor Class) presented to the Treasury in December, 1903, and to which it was stated in May and also in August last that a reply would be shortly given.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I hope that a reply will be given to the memorial referred to by the hon. Member before the end of the month.

Salaries and Fees of the Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what were the amounts paid to the Law Officers of the Crown in salaries and fees for the year ending on March 31st, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) As I am not yet in possession of the figures required, I would ask the hon. Member to postpone his Question till after the Easter Recess.

Promotions of Second - Class Clerks and Examining Officers in the Customs Service.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury how many second-class clerks, lower section, and how many second-class examining officers there were in the Customs Department on March 31st, 1900; how many of these clerks and officers, respectively, have been promoted to the next higher grade since that date; what were the average salaries immediately prior to such promotions; what salaries and what average immediate increases in salary did the promotions carry with them in each case; and what was the average service in the clerical department of the clerks and the average service in the outdoor department of the officers when they obtained these promotions.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The number of second-class clerks, lower section, in the Customs Department on March 31st, 1900, was 117, and of these 106 have since been promoted to the next higher grade, the salary of which is £200–£300. The average salary of these clerks immediately prior to their promotion was £119 19s. 3d., and the average immediate increase in salary upon their promotion amounted to £80 0s. 9d. Their average service was seven years, three months. The number of examining officers, second class, in the Customs Department on March 31st, 1900, was 842. Of these, 159 have since been promoted to the next higher grade, the salary of which is £230–£340. The average salary immediately prior to promotion of these officers was £212 9s. 4d., and the average immediate increase in their salaries upon promotion amounted to £17 10s. 8d. Their average service in the outdoor department previous to their promotion was twenty-three years, six months.

United States and England—Intrepretation of Most-Favoured-Nation Clause.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the United States and England interpret the most-favoured-nation clause in the same way; if not, what is the difference.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The Answer to the first Question is in the negative. The United States hold that a treaty right to most-favoured-nation treatment does not entitle its possessor to participate in special privileges granted to others in return for reciprocal concessions. I would refer the hon. Member to "Commercial, No. 4 (1885); Correspondence respecting the negotiation of a treaty regulating trade between the British West Indies and the United States [C. 4340]," page 20, *et seq.*

Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that by Section 6 of 24 and 25 Vic., c. 14, the Act establishing the Post Office Savings Bank, the Commissioners for the Reduction of the

National Debt are represented as an independent body exercising supervision of the affairs of the Post Office Savings Bank; and that, in practice, the sole acting member of the body is the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being; and, if so, will he recommend the alteration, by repeal and re-enactment, of the wording of this section and of all Acts or sections of Acts in which the Commissioners are represented to be an independent body exercising supervision or control of matters connected with the national finances.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I do not find in the section to which the hon. Member calls my attention any words representing the National Debt Commissioners to be an independent body exercising supervision or control of matters connected with the national finances. I do not propose to introduce legislation to amend the powers of those Commissioners in connection with the management of the Post Office Savings Bank Fund.

Civilian Surgeons attached to South African Army—Double Payment of Income-Tax.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that civilian surgeons attached to His Majesty's forces in South Africa have to pay on their salary and allowances income-tax to the Imperial Exchequer, and at the same time contribute to the revenue of the Colony; and whether, seeing that civilian surgeons in South Africa are the only civilians attached to the Army who pay income-tax on their salaries, he will place these surgeons on an equal footing with other civilians attached to the Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I will make inquiry into the facts. The information at present in my possession does not enable me to answer the Question.

Irish Head Land Commission—Appeal of Mr. Denis Corkeran.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay on the part of the Head Land Commissioners in hearing the appeal of Mr. Denis Corkeran, of Ballinreastig, Douglas, county Cork; why did not the Commissioners call this case during their sitting in Cork last January; and, the case having been listed some three years ago, will he say when the case will be dealt with.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Mr. Corkeran's notice of appeal was received on October 12th, 1903. The appeals heard at the last sitting at Cork in February, 1905, were received prior to October, 1903. Mr. Corkeran's appeal will be included in the next list for the district, but the date of hearing has not yet been arranged.

St. Patrick's Day Celebration at Coagh.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on March 15th, several cannon were fired from the Orange Hall, Coagh, during hours from 4 p.m. to 4 a.m., and that the firing was continued until the evening of St. Patrick's Day; did the police report the circumstance; what was the purpose of the cannonade; if it was intended to annoy and outrage the Catholic residents in the village; and will such a practice be permitted in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Occasional revolver or gun shots, not cannon shots, were fired on the nights of March 15th and 16th, and two or three during the day on March 17th. The police reported the circumstance. The purpose of the firing is not known, but it probably had some connection with the Party celebrations associated with that time of year. The practice of firing shots in a spirit of bravado, which is not confined to one Party, is an objectionable one, and the police do their utmost to prevent it. The offenders in this instance are not known.

Inspection of Irish Firkin Butter.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state in what months between May 15th, 1902, the date on which the Sale of Butter (Ireland) Regulations, 1902, came into operation, and December 31st, 1904, the 1,118 samples of firkin butter were taken for analysis by the local food inspectors in the counties of Clare, Galway, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary; what was the number of samples taken in each county; and whether any of them was other than that of Irish salt firkin butter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department are not in possession of the dates on which the samples were taken, but will make inquiry; and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member. The number of samples taken in each county is stated below, the samples being those of salt firkin butter exposed for sale in the counties mentioned:—

County.	No. of samples taken.
Clare . . .	236
Galway . . .	176
Kerry . . .	56
Limerick . . .	492
Tipperary, N.R. .	121
Tipperary, S.R. .	37
Total . .	1,118

Suggested Appointment of a Commission on Irish Railways.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if an application has been made to him with regard to the appointment of any kind of Commission on the subject of Irish Railways; if so, does he contemplate acceding to the application; will it be a Vice-Regal Commission; how will it be constituted; and what will be the scope of its duties.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I beg to refer to my reply to the similar Question addressed to me on the 3rd† inst. by the hon. Member for West Limerick.

Farm of Ringillane, Kilcolgan.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the farm of Ringillane, Kilcolgan, county Galway, has been offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners by Miss Matilda George, with a view of enlarging the small uneconomic holdings in the immediate neighbourhood; and what steps, if any, have been taken to acquire the farm for that purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Yes Sir, and the Commissioners have had a preliminary inspection made of the lands, and are in communication with the owner on the subject of purchase.

Rules under the Irish Land Act, 1903.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that as yet only temporary rules have been made regulating transactions under the Land Act of 1903, and that these temporary rules involve references to three other sets of rules under previous Acts; and when a consolidated set of permanent rules may be expected to be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The rules are being codified and will be issued as soon as possible. I cannot, however, fix a date for their issue.

Strength of Royal Irish Constabulary in County Roscommon.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the strength at which the Royal Irish Constabulary has been maintained annually in the county of Roscommon from 1899 to 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The average actual strength of the free force in the county for the years specified was as follows:—

Year.	Free Force.
1899 - - - - -	287
1900 - - - - -	299
1901 - - - - -	297
1902 - - - - -	313
1903 - - - - -	304
1904 - - - - -	291

Case of Ex-Lieutenant Kingston.

Sir GEORGE FARDELL (Paddington, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the case of ex-Lieutenant Arthur Kingston, with eleven years and seven months service, who was ordered to resign his commission without trial although he has repeatedly asked for it; and whether, having regard to the fact that Lieutenant Kingston was commended by the Officer Commanding the Ashanti Field Force in 1900 for very good work in capturing and surprising one of the chief rebel leaders, he can see his way to grant an inquiry or allow that officer to take action at law against his former colonel in order to clear his character and prove that he was the victim of mistaken identity.

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† See page 97.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Lieutenant Kingston, Middlesex Regiment, while attached to the West African Regiment, was reported for intemperate habits by two successive commanding officers of the regiment and by the officer commanding the troops, Sierra Leone, who stated that he did not consider the officer's retention in the service either desirable or likely to be advantageous to the Army. The Commander-in-Chief accordingly ordered him to resign his commission, and this he did without protest. No further official inquiry into this matter can be granted. As regards a civil action, as Mr. Kingston is not subject to military law, no permission from the War Office is necessary.

Civilian Surgeons attached to South African Army—Customs Rebate.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that civilian surgeons attached to the Army in South Africa are not eligible for the Customs rebate in accordance with a circular Memorandum No. 30, dated 4th July, 1904, and issued by the Chief Staff Officer, South Africa; and whether, seeing that nursing sisters and school mistresses attached to the Army participate in the rebate, he will see that civilian surgeons are placed on an equal footing with other civilians attached to the Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) I am aware of the circular referred to. The whole question of the Customs rebate was settled by a conference of Customs officers of the several South African Colonies. It was decided that civil surgeons are ineligible to receive this rebate, and the Army Council is not, therefore, in a position to alter this decision.

Colonial Conference—Emigration to the Colonies.

Mr. CROOKS: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will submit to the Colonial Conference any proposals for a joint scheme of emigration to the Colonies, to be arranged between the Home Government and the Governments of the several Colonies.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The period for making definite proposals with regard to the topics to be dealt with by the Colonial Conference has hardly yet arrived.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Volunteers in the South African War.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many efficient Volunteers went to the front during the South African War.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): The number of Volunteers that went out to South Africa in Volunteer Service Companies and the City of London Imperial Volunteers was 19,856 of all ranks. Besides these there were struck off the strength of Volunteer Corps as having joined the Imperial Yeomanry 6,209 of all ranks. Volunteers included in the first category were required to have been "efficient Volunteers"; of the others it cannot be said how many had been "efficient Volunteers," and how many had not.

Militia Encampments—Dining Tents.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if dining tents are no longer to be supplied to Militia battalions going into camp for training, or if it is only a few battalions that are not to be given them.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield): Dining tents will be issued as far as they are available to all regiments of Militia asking for them. Owing to adverse reports on the tents, and the fact that many Militia units prefer not to draw them, only a limited number of tents have been provided.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that they have been already refused to some Militia battalions?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I am not; perhaps the hon. Gentleman will inform me.

War Office Purchases of Civilian Clothing.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will state how many suits of civilian clothes have been contracted for, made at the clothing factory, or otherwise obtained or ordered by the War Office authorities since January, 1904; and at what dates the orders were given.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: 4,050 suits have been obtained by contract since January, 1904. None have been made up at the factory or otherwise obtained. The dates the orders were given are as follows:—February 27th, 1904, 50 suits; July 6th, 1904, 100 suits; September 27th, 1904, 200 suits; October 1st, 1904, 150 suits; October 22nd, 1904, 50 suits; October 25th, 1904, 1,500 suits; March 7th, 1905, 1,900 suits; March 11th, 1905, 100 suits. The suits ordered were of sizes of which there were none in stock or of which the stock was low.

Conversion of Service Rifles.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if definite instructions have been given, or are in contemplation, to the Master-General of Ordnance to proceed with the conversion of the service rifle to clip loading at a cost of 11s. per rifle.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Instructions have been given to the Master-General of Ordnance to this effect for a limited number of rifles.

North Randfontein Mine—Coolie Strike.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any information of a strike of 2,000 Chinese coolies on Saturday last, at the North Randfontein Mine, near Krugersdorp, the alleged grounds of revolt being dissatisfaction with wages; that, on the police being called in, the casualties among the Chinese were considerable, and that fifty-three coolies were eventually arrested; and whether, if he has no information, he will at once obtain it from South Africa.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have not yet received a reply to the inquiry which I made by telegraph on Monday.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies how many of the indentured labourers on the North Randfontein Mine who have served for six months are receiving wages of less than 1s. 6d. per day; and whether the Labour Ordinance imposes the condition of a minimum of 36 inches drilled before the 1s. 6d. is given.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have not the information for which the hon. Member asks. The Labour Ordinance does not impose this condition. The contract is printed at page 9 of Cd. 2183.

MR. WHITLEY: Are we correct in understanding that the Ordinance provides that after six months service the minimum pay shall be raised to 1s. 6d. per day?

MR. LYTTELTON: Certainly; provided that the average pay has not reached a certain height.

Agreement with Afghanistan.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Agreement entered into by the British Government and the Ameer of Afghanistan as the result of the recent British Mission to Cabul, together with other Papers connected with the Mission, will be laid before Parliament at an early date; whether he will give a general indication of the contents of the Agreement; and whether it differs in any material respect from the previous Agreement existing between the British Government and the late Ameer.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I propose shortly to lay on the Table a translation of the Agreement recently concluded with the Ameer of Afghanistan, together with such Papers as are necessary to elucidate it. The purport of the Agreement, as has already been stated in another place, is merely to continue and confirm Agreements which existed between the British Government and the late Ameer.

The Anglo-French Convention and Germany.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Convention entered into by His Majesty's Government with the French Republic, dated 8th April, 1904, was officially communicated to the German Government, and when; whether, if so, any reply to the communication was received by His Majesty's Government, and, if so received, will he lay it upon the Table of the House; whether any subsequent communications have passed between this Government and Germany in regard to the said Convention; and, if so, will he lay them upon the Table of the House; whether Germany has any Treaty with Morocco securing to it any special commercial rights and privileges; and, if so, whether they are analogous to the rights and privileges secured to this country by the Convention of Commerce and Navigation concluded between this country and Morocco in 1856, and confirmed by the Convention between this country and France, dated 8th April, 1904; and whether the Sultan of Morocco still retains the right to enter into Treaties or Conventions granting commercial rights and privileges with countries which were not parties to the Convention of 8th April, 1904.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of State for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): The Declaration of April 8th, 1904, between the United Kingdom and France was not officially communicated to the German Government, and there were no communications between His Majesty's Government and that of Germany in regard to it so far as it had reference to Morocco. The Sultan of Morocco was not a party to the Declaration, which was an independent arrangement between the British and French Governments having reference to their respective interests in that country. The Treaty between Germany and Morocco of 1890 is analogous to that of 1856 between this country and Morocco.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The right hon. Gentleman says there were no communications between Germany and this country with reference to Morocco. Were there any with reference to other parts of the Empire?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order!

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: This Question has reference to the French Convention, and I think my Question is in order.

*Earl PERCY said the Question had reference to Morocco. No communication had been made to the German Government except in reference to the Khedival Decree.

The New Post Office Wages Scheme.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green); I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state whether he proposes to get the sanction of the House of Commons before he introduces his new scheme on Post Office wages; and can he state what is the probable date of the debate on the Post Office Vote.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The new scales of wages have been introduced from the 1st instant. I am unable at present to state the probable date of the debate on the Post Office Vote. I will consult with my right hon. friend the Leader of the House and try and arrange a date to meet the convenience of hon. Members.

Post Office Wages—The Increase of the Minimum Salary.

Mr. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if it is the intention not to make the proposed increase of the minimum salary by 1s. applicable to those who are at present in the service, in view of the discontent that exists at present among the male and female officials under the age of twenty-five.

LORD STANLEY: The increase of 1s. in the minimum salary of certain classes is not applicable to officers already in the service, unless they are at present receiving a salary lower than the new minimum. In that case their pay is at once raised to the new minimum.

Learners and the New Wage Scheme.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General is he aware that learners who have hitherto received 18s. per week while performing substitute duty will under his new scheme be reduced to 10s. per week; and whether, seeing that such negative concessions are not calculated to lesson the discontent in the service, will he take any further steps in the matter.

LORD STANLEY: I gave an Answer to a similar Question yesterday†. I am aware that there are cases of the kind to which the hon. Member refers, and on the 4th inst. I issued general instructions that learners already employed as substitutes may be given the option of retaining their present varying rates of pay as learners and as substitutes, in lieu of the constant rates for learners with two years service and upwards, indicated in my announcement of the 28th ultimo.

Post Office Savings Bank Return No. 88.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the Return just issued, No. 88, "Statement showing the aggregate amount of the Liabilities of the Government to Depositors in Post Office Savings Banks on 31st December, 1903, etc.," is the form adopted for Returns to be made annually; if so, whether a Return in this form will be supplementary to a statement of the nature and amount of the securities standing in the names of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, such as that contained in the Fiftieth Report of the Postmaster-General, or whether it will be substituted for such a Return.

LORD STANLEY: Return 88 of this year shows the form proposed for the Return required by Section 9 (1) of the Savings Bank Act, 1904. It will probably be convenient that the statement usually attached to the Postmaster-General's Report should follow the same form.

Sea Encroachment near Brighton.

SIR H. AUBREY-FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been drawn to the erosion by the action of the sea of the cliffs adjoining the high road leading from Brighton to Rottingdean, and thence to Newhaven, and which threatens to destroy the road in certain places; and whether, in view of the expense that would be incurred in procuring land up the Downs, and making a new road, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have received some representations with regard to this road. The matter is not one with respect to which I am empowered to take any compulsory action, but I am informed that the road is a main road vested in the East Sussex County Council, and I am communicating with the council on the subject.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Does the right hon. Gentleman apprehend danger of any further land slide in that district?

Exchequer Issues.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, can he explain how it is that the Exchequer issues in respect of the National Debt for 1904–5, as shown in the published accounts, amount to £26,986,668 instead of £27,000,000, the permanent or fixed annual charge, and why the balance of £13,332 was not issued.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The hon. Member's Question is based on a misapprehension of the figures in the published accounts. The Exchequer issues in respect of the National Debt for 1904–5 were £27,000,000 as provided by law.

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† See page 442.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I have added up the figures. I want the hon. Gentleman to explain the misapprehension.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I can do it, but not in answer to a Question across the floor of the House.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I want a public explanation—not a private one.

Chinese War Indemnity.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the amount of the annual instalments now payable in respect of the British share of the Chinese war indemnity; and whether these instalments will be applied to the reduction of debt.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Negotiations are now in progress between the Chinese Government and the representatives of the Powers as to the basis of payment of the indemnity. Until these are concluded the amount of the annual instalments receivable by this country cannot be stated. Proposals will in due course be submitted to Parliament as to the application of the British share.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Then are we to understand that the British instalments are not fixed?

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: Yes, that is so.

Underfed School Children — Teachers' Duties.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether it is the duty of a teacher in an elementary school, if he finds a child destitute of necessary food, to apply to the relieving officer of the district; if not, what course is it the teacher's duty to take.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University): The duty of a teacher in an elementary school is defined by the terms of his agreement with his managers or local education authority. I am not prepared to say what duties such an agreement may impose, except that they must not involve an infringement of Article 15 of the Code.

Pauper Children in Public Elementary Schools.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.); I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether a local education authority can refuse to admit to schools maintained by such authority children who are boarded in the union workhouse when such workhouse is situated within the area of that authority; and whether, if the workhouse in question be not the property of the council in whose area it is situated, the local authority may require the council maintaining the workhouse to make contribution on behalf of the expenses involved in educating these children.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: It is the duty of the guardians to provide for the education of the children under their charge. By Section 2 of the Elementary Education Act, 1900, the guardians may arrange to perform their duty by contributing to the cost of their education at a public elementary school. The Board would, as a general rule, hold that the local authority would be justified in refusing to admit a child, even though there was room in the school, unless the guardians were prepared to make a contribution towards the cost of educating the child.

Church Attendance of School Children on Saints' Days.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, having regard to the terms of Circular 512, the teachers in voluntary schools can be required by the managers of such schools to take children to church on Saints' Days, notwithstanding the attendance by-laws and regulations of the local education authority to the contrary.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The teachers in voluntary schools are bound to carry out the instructions of the managers as to the religious teaching given in those schools except in so far as such instructions may conflict with by-laws as to school attendance or direction as to secular instruction properly made or given by the local education authority.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY: Yes, but the Answer applies to teaching in the schools. This is a case of taking the children to church. Has the right hon. Gentleman anything to say about that?

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I have nothing to add to my Answer.

Provision in Parliament against Sudden Illness of Members.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he is aware that, in cases of sudden illness of Members of this House, there is no private room to which such Members can be brought, and that no provision of any kind is available in any part of the building for such emergencies; and whether steps will be taken to remedy this state of affairs.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The First Commissioner is not prepared with any proposal to meet this suggestion; but he thinks that the appropriation of a room for such a purpose is not a matter within his jurisdiction, but in that of the authorities of the House.

Mr. C. R. SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid.): Will the First Commissioner of Works consider the advisability of providing, something like a medicine chest somewhere?

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: And in view of the fact that sometimes there are nearly a thousand persons in the building, and the sitting lasts nearly twenty-four hours, would it not be well to have a medical man always in attendance?

[No Answer was returned.]

Sir Antony MacDonnell.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the conditions under which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover appointed Sir Antony MacDonnell as Permanent Under-Secretary still exist, or has he now any special powers other than those of an ordinary civil servant.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): Sir Antony MacDonnell holds office as Under-Secretary in the same way as other permanent heads of Departments hold their offices, with this exception, that before he accepted office he received an explicit assurance that he would be treated with complete confidence, be consulted on matters of policy and administration, and be allowed administrative freedom of action, subject, of course, to the approval and control of the Chief Secretary. This, so far as my experience goes, has always been the case between my chief permanent officials and myself, and I hope always will be so.

Mr. SLOAN: I desire an Answer to this definite Question—Whether the special conditions under which Sir Antony MacDonnell received his appointment have been withdrawn or do they still exist?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I have done my best to give a perfectly frank, and, I believe, explicit Answer to the Question. It is extremely difficult to answer a Question of this kind across the floor of the House, when so much depends on the interpretation of the conditions between a permanent official and his chief. I have endeavoured to give what I believe to be an explicit and accurate description of the relations between Sir Antony MacDonnell and myself, and I have added that the relations are similar, in my opinion, to those that always exist between me and my permanent officials.

Mr. SLOAN: Have the conditions under which Sir Antony MacDonnell was appointed by the late Chief Secretary been withdrawn or do they still exist under the jurisdiction of the right hon. Gentleman? That is the Question to which I want an Answer.

Mr. WALTER LONG: There have been a good many attempts to describe the exact relations between the Under-Secretary and his chief, and I think it has been in those descriptions, and in consequence of them, that misunderstandings have arisen. I believe the Answer I have given is an exact description of the relations between Sir Antony MacDonnell and myself, and I fail to see that there is anything further for me to examine into, or that there is any other Answer that could by any possibility be given to the House.

Mr. Sloan, Mr. William Moore, (Antrim, N.) and Mr. Gretton (Derbyshire, S.) rose to put further Questions.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that he has given the only Answer he can possibly give, and if hon. Members think there is any matter which has not already been answered, they can put down a further Question. The present time is not appropriated for argument, but for Questions and Answers. The Answer to the Question on the Paper has been given. It may or may not be satisfactory, but that is not the point, and it cannot be converted into an argument.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE: May I ask whether, as the right hon. Gentleman says it is a matter of personal interpretation, his interpretations of the late Chief Secretary's letters are binding on himself?

Galway Untenanted Lands—Case of Mr. Rothwell.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Rothwell, petty sessions clerk of Ballinasloe, is to get any portion of the untenanted land on the estate purchased by the Estates Commissioners from Mr. Mahon, Ballydonlon, county Galway, in view of the fact that he does not live within several miles of the estate, and that he has more than one farm elsewhere.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners have no information beyond that which I have already given to the hon. Member. Mr. Rothwell may possibly be negotiating with the owner for the purchase of part of the demesne lands, but of this the Commissioners have no knowledge.

Potato Growing Trials in Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Irish Agricultural Department, when refusing to accept from Mr. Williamson one ton of the "Duchess of Cornwall" potato, free of cost, offered to purchase from that gentleman one ton at the rate of £10, being one-tenth of the market price at which selected seed could be bought; and whether the Department now intend to carry out trials of this variety of potato in nineteen counties and on their own farms as originally decided upon; and if he will state the source from which the supply has been obtained, the price paid, and the quantity required for these trials this year.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Seed of the variety mentioned was originally purchased from a Scotch grower. It has been tested for the past three years on the Department's experimental farms, and the supply to be utilised this year is the produce of the original supply. The Department did offer to purchase a ton at the cost stated. The trials which it was intended to carry out in nineteen counties will not now be made.

Irish Local Government Stocktakers.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amount expended during the past financial year by Irish boards of guardians and district lunatic asylum committees on salaries of stocktakers appointed to take stock of the provisions of these institutions; and whether, seeing that these officers were created by the Local Government Board under the Act of 1898, the amount expended on account of their salaries will be recouped to the local authorities by the Treasury or from some Government source.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Local Government Board are not in possession of the information asked for. It is not intended to recoup the local authorities.

Gore Booth Estate, County Sligo.

Mr. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the question of the reinstatement of John Quinn, an evicted tenant on the Gore Booth Estate, situate in Lavagh, Tubbercurry, county Sligo, and now about to be sold to the tenants under the Act of 1903, has been left for settlement to the Estates Commissioners and the agent of the estate by the present occupier and the evicted tenant with the concurrence of the landlord; and, if so, whether, under the circumstances, and in the interests of the peace of the locality, the Estates Commissioners will be instructed to bring about an immediate settlement of this case.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No, Sir, it is not the case that the settlement of this matter has been left to the Commissioners by all the persons concerned.

Evicted Tenants on the White Estate, Bantry.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inspector appointed by the Estates Commissioners to inquire into the cases of evicted tenants on the White Estate, near Bantry, made personal inquiry or through a member of the firm of solicitors who had the carriage of the sale of the estate.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners have no information on the point but will make inquiry.

Mr. GILHOOLY: Who appointed this inspector and who is he?

Mr. WALTER LONG: Obviously if the Commissioners have no information I cannot have any.

Mr. H. T. Wright's County Cork Estate—The Bonus Difficulty.

Mr. GILHOOLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that Mr. Henry T. Wright, Crown Solicitor for the county of Cork, after agreeing to sell to his tenants under the Land Act of 1903, refused to do so through the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board on the grounds that he would not be entitled to the bonus, he will say whether, in the event of sales direct to the Congested Districts Board or the Estates Commissioners, Mr. Wright would be entitled to the bonus.

Mr. WALTER LONG: No proceedings for the sale of this estate have come before the Commissioners. If the estate were sold through the Commissioners a bonus would be payable, but until the facts are before them the Commissioners cannot say whether the bonus would be added to the purchase money or paid to the vendor.

King-Harman Estate, County Roscommon.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners are aware that the tenants' interests in the holdings of Mr. Marshall (160 acres), Dr. Rhodden (142 acres), Mr. Jameson (120 acres), and Major Smith (80 acres), all non-residential grazing farms on the King-Harman Estate, county Roscommon, can be secured by them for the purpose of enlargement of holdings; whether these lands have been actually offered to the Commissioners for the purpose stated; and if not, or in any event, whether the Commissioners will now take any steps to purchase the tenants' interests in the lands mentioned.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of Mr. Jameson's farm, the only one of those mentioned which has been offered to them. They will consider the question of purchasing any grazing farms which may be offered to them.

Drumconrath Medical Relief Dispensary.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the action of the Local Government Board in proceeding by sealed order to suppress the Drumconrath Medical Relief Dispensary; whether he is aware that under the new arrangement some of the sick poor will be at least ten or twelve miles from the nearest medical relief centre; and, if so, whether, in view of the opposition of the ratepayers to the change and the protest of the Ardee Board of Guardians, within whose district the division affected is situated, against the proposal, he will invite the Local Government Board to reconsider its decision.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Drumconrath dispensary district was merged in the adjoining districts of Dunleer and Collon No. 2. In each of these districts the residence of the medical officer is now centrally situated and within a reasonable distance of all parts of the district, and the Board are satisfied that no revision of their decision is necessary.

MR. NOLAN: Has not this change been made in direct opposition to the wishes of the whole of the people, as well as of the local authorities. What does the right hon. Gentleman consider "a reasonable distance?" Is it eleven or twelve miles?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Rathmolyn and Kildalkey Police Stations.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain what are the reasons for closing the Rathmolyn and Kildalkey police stations; to what barracks have the men been transferred; and if he can state the number of other stations closed, and in what counties, since 1903.

MR. WALTER LONG: The information asked for cannot well be compressed within the limits of an oral Answer, and, with my hon. friend's permission, I will circulate my reply with to-night's Votes.

New Education Rule 127 (b).

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Commissioners of Education in Ireland made any effort to ascertain the opinions of managers and others previous to making the new Rule 127 (b): how such effort was made by them; at how many meetings was the rule discussed; how many Commissioners were present at the discussion; on the motion of which Commissioner was the rule adopted; and whether it was adopted unanimously.

MR. WALTER LONG; For the reasons stated by me yesterday†, I would ask the hon. Member to defer this Question until after the Easter recess.

Grant for Agricultural Schemes in Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in consequence of the procedure followed by the Congested Districts Board, no contribution is made by them, or by the Agricultural Department, to technical and agricultural schemes for the benefit of congested districts in the county of Kerry, or elsewhere; and whether, in view of the injury resulting to the residents of such congested districts by the withholding of a contribution, he will take any steps to enable the Congested Districts Board to contribute to the carrying out of these schemes through the county committees.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have already stated that the Department have assumed charge of agricultural schemes in the congested districts of Kerry. A sum of £1,772 was expended on such schemes in 1904, and of this the Department contributed £1,148, the balance being provided locally. The Congested Districts Board have no funds to contribute to the technical instruction schemes in congested districts.

Agricultural Experiments in Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what number of experiments under the Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act have been carried out in county Cavan up to March 31st, 1905, specifying the valuation of the holdings on which same were tried; and further, if he will state the number of said experiments made upon the holdings of agricultural labourers in county Cavan.

MR. WALTER LONG: In 1902, ten; in 1903, thirty; in 1904, twenty. The Department have not yet received a report as to the number of experiments which the county committee's instructor has arranged for the present season; and they have no information as to the valuation of the holdings concerned, or whether any of these holdings belong to agricultural labourers.

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† See page 465.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): What is the nature of the experiments?

MR. WALTER LONG: That I cannot say without notice.

Irish Land Purchase—Instructions to Inspectors.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the instructions for the guidance of inspectors, dated February, 1904, which have been cancelled by those dated February 9th, 1905, will also be presented to Parliament in accordance with the promise of the right hon. Member for Dover; and whether, seeing that the instructions dated February, 1905, only relate to sales to persons other than the Land Commission, any instructions have been issued to inspectors in cases of sales to the Land Commission direct; and, if so, when these instructions will be laid upon the Table.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir, I do not propose to lay the instructions of February, 1904, which were informal, on the Table of the House. The instructions of February, 1905, have regard to all sales, and are not limited to sales to persons other than the Land Commissioners. They include, in Part II., instructions under Sections 3, 6, and 8 of the Act of 1903.

Longfield Estate, County Roscommon.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether untenanted land on the Longfield Estate, at Callow, near Frenchpark, in the county of Roscommon, has been offered for sale to the Congested Districts Board; and, if so, what is the date of the offer; whether, and, if so, when the estate has been inspected on behalf of the Board; whether, in reply to the offer of the owner, any offer has been made by the owner; and whether steps will be taken to expedite the purchase of this land by the Board in view of the possibility of its being let for grazing for the coming summer.

MR. WALTER LONG: The reply to the first inquiry is in the negative.

Goold Estate, County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have entered into any negotiations for the purchase of the untenated land on the Goold Estate, Athea, county Limerick, containing upwards of 200 acres, and which is let to graziers every year, in view of the sale of the tenanted portion of the estate to the tenants; whether he is aware that there are about 100 tenants on the estate whose holdings are under £5 annual value; whether the Commissioners received the list of names of these tenants; and whether they will sanction the sale of the tenanted portion of the estate without seeing that the uneconomic holdings be enlarged.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; and no proceedings for the sale of the estate have come before the Commissioners. The question of untenanted land will be considered if the estate comes before them.

Commissioners of Irish Lights.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how is the Board of Commissioners of Irish Lights constituted; what is the qualification for membership; also, seeing the general dissatisfaction expressed by the various harbour authorities in Ireland, whether he will take some steps to have harbour boards get some representation on this body.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): May I be allowed to answer this Question? I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Return (No. 35) as to general Lighthouse Authorities which was presented to this House at the beginning of the session, and which sets out the constitution of the Board of Commissioners of Irish Lights. His Majesty's Government are not prepared to introduce a Bill to provide for the representation of harbour authorities on the Board.

MR. JOYCE: Have the Board of Trade any control over the Irish Lights Commissioners?

MR. BONAR LAW: I think they have some little control, but perhaps the hon. Member will put down the Question.

School Building Grants for East Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury can he say whether any managers of national schools in East Limerick, within the past five years, have been in treaty with the Commissioners of National Education about obtaining grants for the building of schools, and so far have failed in their efforts; and, if so, will he say what has been the cause of the failure; and when he expects that the Commissioners will be in a position to issue their new code of rules as regards building.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I am informed that certain applications for building grants have been made, but that there are being held over pending the settlement of the general question of revised plans for national schools, which, as I have already stated, I am endeavouring to expedite. I understand, however, that in the case of one application special plans are under consideration which may enable the work to be proceeded with under the regulations now in force.

Ballina Post Office Revision.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can say what action will be taken, and when, as a result of the revision at Ballina Post Office, county Mayo, held in February, 1904, in respect of the staff there.

LORD STANLEY: A revision of the indoor staff at the Ballina Office has now been sanctioned, and will be carried out in due course. Provision is made for increasing the number of male sorting clerks and telegraphists from four to six.

Irish Telegraph Messengers—Cap and Boot Contracts.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the contract for the supplying of the 2,000 caps to the telegraph messengers in Ireland has been transferred to England; and whether, seeing that the contract for caps and boots for these messengers, which are now manufactured in this country, was previously executed in Ireland, and that this is purely Irish work for use in Ireland, he will have it executed in that country in future.

LORD STANLEY: I invited separate tenders for the shakos and caps required in Ireland in the hope that I might be able to place the contract in that country. Unfortunately the only tender I received was at so high a rate that I could not accept it. For telegraph messengers' boots also I received only one tender from Ireland, and there again the rates quoted were too high for acceptance.

Underfed School Children.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Bill to provide, under proper safeguards, for the feeding of hungry children, brought in by the hon. Member for Hoxton, and supported, amongst others, by the hon. Members for Sheffield Brightside, South Islington, West Bradford, Stoke-upon-Trent, and South-West Bethnal Green; and whether, having regard to the fact that these hon. Members are all supporters of the Government, he will give facilities for the Second Reading of this Bill and for the reference of it to a Grand Committee if the same can be arranged by consent.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think the hon. Gentleman is under some misapprehension when he supposes that the objection that I am sure every Leader of the House feels to giving facilities for private Members' Bills is at all modified by consideration of the quarter from which the support of the Bill comes. The objection is of quite a general character, and I do not think I can waive it in this instance, especially as there is a Committee appointed to inquire into this question.

Dr. MACNAMARA: May I ask whether, having regard to the nature of this Bill, the Prime Minister will inform his supporters behind him that it is not his desire that they should block it.

Mr. CROOKS: Is not the First Lord of the Treasury of opinion that part of the business of the Prime Minister of the country is to study the condition of the underfed children of the country.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is with a view to studying the condition of the underfed children of the country that we have appointed a Committee to give us the necessary knowledge of the facts. For my part I think we ought not to legislate on this subject without that knowledge.

Pension Regulations.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware of the fact that under existing legislation a soldier or sailor on joining the Civil Service is not allowed to count his military or naval service, as the case may be, towards the pension, if any, he receives at the close of his period of engagement in the Civil Service; and whether, having regard to the desirableness of providing suitable employment for time-expired soldiers and sailors, he will consider the question as to whether such men on the close of their Civil Service appointments should not have counted to their credit for pension their service with the Army or Navy.

Sir J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, will he say if he is aware that candidates on the roll of the Royal Irish Constabulary are permitted to join the Irish Guards on a three years enlistment?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have had no time to get at the facts, and could not therefore answer that now. As to the Question on the Paper, I would remind the hon. Gentleman and the House that the subject of pensions is regulated by statute, which cannot be changed either at the will of the Treasury or at my will. The House of Commons itself would have to initiate legislation on the subject, and without legislation nothing can be done. Whether the soldiers would desire to see the system the right hon. Gentleman recommends carried out I do not know. Of course, they would be prevented from receiving their pensions as soldiers while they were serving, say, as postmen. But, in any case, whether they wish it or not, the change cannot be carried out without legislation.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Royal Commission on questions of property arising between the United Free Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland has now reported; and, if so, when the Report will be in the hands of Members.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say when the Report will be in the hands of Members. Every expedition is being made in regard to it.

Civil Service Estimates.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when it is proposed to move Mr. Speaker out of the Chair on going into Committee of Supply on Civil Service Estimates.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope next Thursday.

The Home-Service Army.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, as President of the Council of Defence, whether it is proposed to proceed with the formation of a home-service Army on a short-service basis, within the next few months, a commencement being made as soon as sufficient long-service enlistments for India have been secured, whether the Militia is to form part of this home-service Army; and, if so, whether all or what portions of the Militia are to be so transformed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: This Question has nothing to do with the Committee of Defence, and I have therefore asked my right hon. friend to answer it.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It will not be possible to commence short-service recruiting for several months. But when an adequate number of men enlisted for long service has been obtained, the enlistment of men for a shorter period of service must be commenced. No short-service battalions will be formed before October. No Militia units will be included in the short-service Army except with their consent.

The Position of Junior Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether it is in accordance with precedent for the office of Junior Lord of the Treasury to be held by any other than a Member of this House, and, if not, what steps the right hon. Gentleman proposes to take with regard to this office in view of the fact that Mr. Gerald Loder has not been elected to a seat in this House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It certainly is usual that the Junior Lord of the Treasury should be a Member of this House, though I suppose there is no constitutional reason why it should be so. I do not remember in my own personal experience, but I have read that Mr. Gladstone was Secretary to the Colonies for six or seven months though he was out of the House and unable to obtain a seat in this House—having, in fact, been turned out of the House on accepting office.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Junior Lord of the Treasury has any duties whatever except those connected with the business of this House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The duties of the Junior Lord of the Treasury under the Constitution are as well known to the right hon. Gentleman as to myself, and I do not think any detailed exposition of the character of those duties would add to the knowledge of either side.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this is not the second member of his Administration who has been rejected at the polls quite recently, and whether he is still of opinion that his Ministry retains the confidence of the country?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks me a Question of fact and a Question of opinion. On the Question of fact, it is the case that the Solicitor-General for Scotland failed to obtain a seat in this House after he had taken office, and it is true that the Junior Lord of the Treasury has just failed to keep his seat. But when the hon. Gentleman asks me what I think the opinion of the country is, I imagine that that can only be judged by a general election.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have to ask the First Lord of the Treasury as to the order of business for next week.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Budget will be taken on Monday, and Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday will probably be occupied by the Budget Resolutions. I trust these will be concluded on Wednesday, and if that is so, we shall get the Speaker out of the Chair on the Civil Service Estimates on Thursday. The week following we propose to deal with stages of Government legislation.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What measures will be proceeded with?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: We are going to introduce the Aliens Bill and the Unemployed Bill under the Ten Minutes Rule. I am anxious to proceed with the Second Reading of the Scotch Education Bill and the Agricultural Rates Bill; but I cannot at present give any date for those measures.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Ernest Amherst Villiers, Esquire, for the Borough of Brighton.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

NEW BILLS.

TRADES UNIONS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Trades Unions," presented by Sir Alfred Hickman; supported by Sir James Heath, Sir William Tomlinson, Mr. Arthur Heath, and Mr. Galloway; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 151.]

TUBERCULOSIS (ANIMALS) PREVENTION AND COMPENSATION BILL.

"To provide for the Payment of Compensation to the owners of carcases of animals condemned after slaughter, and destroyed by order of a magistrate, on account of Tuberculosis, and to assist in the Prevention of Tuberculosis," presented by Mr. Ernest Gray; supported by Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Field, Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. David MacIver, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. William Rutherford, Mr. Schwann, and Mr. Tomkinson; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 152.]

SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to Electric Lighting," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 153.]

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Fisheries in Ireland, and for the better protection thereof," presented by Sir Henry Seton-Karr; supported by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Robert Penrose-FitzGerald, Mr. Grenfell, Captain Bagot, and Colonel Nolan; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 154.]

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY] [5TH APRIL].

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

"That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Resolution read a second time.

***MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.)** moved a reduction of the Vote by £100 in order, he said, to get from the Secretary for War a more explicit statement of what his proposals were in regard to the home-service Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers. They had that morning a leading article in the *Standard* calling upon the Prime Minister to give an explicit and stirring address to his followers in the House, and he proposed now to call upon the Secretary for War to give an explicit statement of his policy. In the Memorandum issued by the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the Army Estimates he told them there would be a saving on this item of £700,000, but he was bound to confess he could not see how it was to be brought about if the right hon. Gentleman was not going to put his scheme into operation. After the statement which they had had from the Prime Minister on the preceding night, they must draw the conclusion that the Government were departing from their proposals to reduce the expenditure upon the Volunteers by £300,000, and he now wished to press for information as to whether the proposed reduction of £700,000 in regard to the Regular Army was also to be abandoned. The House really did not know where it stood in regard to the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman put before it on July 14th last. They were told in that scheme that they were to have a home-service Army and a long-service Army. Was the right hon. Gentleman enlisting at the present time for that long service Army at an earlier age than nineteen and a-half years, which was the age suggested recruits were to be enlisted at? Surely the right hon. Gentleman could tell them what his scheme really was. Could he not do so in a few words? He was afraid, however, that they might as soon expect the Secretary for War to be explicit as they did the Prime Minister. Ambiguity was the design of the one and the misfortune of the other, but he did think the right hon. Gentleman should try and lay before the House his proposals in regard to the Volunteers, and to state what reductions, if any, he intended to carry out. Both sides of the House were utterly befogged as to where the scheme stood, especially after the interposition of the Prime Minister in the preceding night's debate. He wished to know whether the Secretary for War was now prepared to corroborate what fell from the Prime Minister? Whether he was departing from the scheme laid before the House on July 14th last, and in what respect he was making such a departure? Did he intend to reduce the establishment of the Volunteers this year by 114,000 men? If so, how did he propose to do it? Was it to be done by abolishing battalions, or did he propose to reduce the number of companies in the battalions? Those were questions which they were fully entitled to put to the right hon. Gentleman. He would again ask him to give them an intelligible exposition of the policy—not his policy, but the policy which the Cabinet had now approved.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£10,101,000,' and insert '£10,100,900.'"—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed, "That '£10,101,000' stand part of the said Resolution."

*Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) desired to apologise for again intruding on the House on this question. The hon. Gentleman opposite had put to the Government certain definite Questions, particularly in reference to the Volunteers, and he did think it was most important that the present uncertainty and doubt which existed in regard to the proposals of the Government should be removed.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is under a misapprehension if he thinks he can discuss the Volunteers or the Militia on the Report of this Vote. The Vote is for the pay of the Regular Army, and the debate must be confined to the question of the payment of wages for the Regular Army.

*Mr. McCRAE pointed out that in the Vote there were certain sums set aside for schools of instruction for Mounted Infantry, for Militia and for Volunteers. Would not that fact entitle them to discuss questions affecting the Militia and Volunteers?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Anything regarding the pay of the instructors may be discussed, but there is a Vote for the Militia and another for the Volunteers, and any general discussion in regard to those forces must take place on those particular Votes.

*Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said he wished to say something about the proposal for the home-service Army which the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward, and that indirectly involved the position of the Militia. Was he not entitled under the circumstances to raise that question?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): May I ask if it was not an understanding that we should have four days general discussion on the Army question. It may seem a departure from the usual practice to have a general discussion on the Report of this Vote, but I believe that on this occasion there was a general understanding that the Government should give us four days—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday—to discuss Army matters.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know whether there was any understanding between the right hon. Gentlemen, but certainly I was not a party to it, and it is my duty to carry out the rules of the House.

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham): Where is the Prime Minister?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN I hope I shall be in order in appealing to the Government whether it is not the case that we were promised four days for a full discussion on general Army questions. If that is so, will the Government fulfil their promise?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I do not desire to avoid any discussion, but I imagine that the ordinary procedure has been followed. On Vote 1 general Army questions can be discussed, and it has always been the practice to do that on the Committee stage, but the discussion on the Report stage has always been confined to the discussion of matters contained in the Vote itself. Vote 1 was set down for this week in order that there might be a general discussion. I would point out that the general discussion on Army matters has now lasted eight days.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): We do not know where we are.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER replied that the ordinary practice had been adopted in this case, and added that already three days had been given to the debate on this Vote.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I notice that the Leader of the House has just entered, and perhaps I may be allowed to explain the point I have attempted to make. You, Mr. Speaker, have laid down from the Chair what I admit is in accordance with the rules and with what the right hon. Gentleman has just said, that the regular practice is on the Report stage of Vote 1 to confine the discussion to matters contained in the Vote; but I submit that this is not a usual occasion. There was an undertaking given, when the general arrangements for this discussion were being made, that the whole of the Government time in this week should be devoted to a general debate on Army questions. If the right hon. Gentleman has chosen to bring the debate on Vote 1 in the Committee stage to a conclusion, instead of continuing it over till to-day, I submit that the House ought not to suffer, and, inasmuch as it was promised that there should be four full days, that the general discussion should be allowed to continue on this stage.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he would like to point out to the Prime Minister that the Vote was agreed to on the preceding night on the understanding that the general discussion could be resumed the next day.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that when the Chairman of Committees put the Vote it was actually past the hour for the interruption of debate, and had there been the slightest opposition it could not have been put. He was in his place at the time, and he offered no opposition because he understood that the Government were anxious to get the Report stage, but at the same time he also understood that they would not be prevented from continuing the discussion.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said there was some misconception, but he was anxious to carry the House with him. He would indeed be grieved if he did not, for so much depended on the carrying out of arrangements between the two sides of the House. No doubt a strong appeal was made to him to afford full opportunity of discussing Vote 1, and he promised that should be done. But there were financial considerations, which were brought to the notice of Parliament, which made it necessary that they should get both the Committee and the Report stages of Vote 1 in the course of the present week. He certainly gave no pledge that the Report stage should be taken under any rules but those which governed the procedure of the House, nor would it have been possible for him to do so. But if it were consistent with the rules of order he should welcome such liberty being given to the House as would enable the discussion on the Report stage to travel over the same ample region as it had travelled over for the last few days in Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER said that he, of course, had no object except to see that the rules of the House were carried out. The established rule was that the general debate on the Question, that he do leave the chair, might be continued on Vote A in Committee, but that then the discusion on Vote 1 in Committee must be confined strictly to Vote 1, and the discussion on the Report of Votes A and 1, Army Votes, must be confined to what was in Votes A and 1. But as in the present instance there was evidently an arrangement come to between both sides under a misunderstanding, either as to the rule or as to what was said by one side or the other, he should not deem it necessary to interfere with the general discussion proceeding on the same lines as in Committee.

*Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said that he wished to take that opportunity of stating that, whatever criticisms he might indulge in, they were not directed against the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War personally, but had reference to his policy. They were indebted to the Prime Minister for having allowed the understanding to be carried out in regard to a general debate, and he wished to make it perfectly clear to hon. Members around him, at any rate, that he was not attacking the Government as a whole, he was only attacking a particular departure and a particular policy which he thought was to the detriment of the country and of the Army. The hon. Member for East Edinburgh had asked his right hon. friend certain definite Questions, and had requested him to state once and for all what was his policy in regard to the Volunteer force. He entirely endorsed that request, because he felt that a great deal of harm was being done to the Volunteer force and therefore to the country by the state of uncertainty in which the right hon. Gentleman was leaving that force. He had served in the Volunteer force, and at the present time he was in the Militia force, and he thought he was entitled to join with the hon. Member opposite in begging the right hon. Gentleman to put an end to a state of uncertainty which was doing much harm to both forces. He said emphatically that the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman in not definitely stating what he proposed to do was an attitude which was not justified, and they had a right to demand that he should tell the House and the country what his proposals were.

What was the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman? Last year he came to the House with certain very definite proposals which partook of the character of abolishing the Militia. The right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, said he did not propose to abolish the Militia, but he did propose to abolish half the battalions and to so alter the remaining half that they would no longer be Militia. They might retain some continuity of service, but they would be a sort of bastard part of the Line. Since then he had told them that he had dropped these proposals, that they were not before the House, and that they were not before the country. Yet, when they asked him what was before the House and before the country, he never spoke about his real policy, but he invariably talked about his scheme of last year. Only the other day his hon. friend the Member for Portsmouth put a certain Question to the right hon. Gentleman, and he answered it by vindicating at great length what would be the condition of the Militia unit to which his hon. friend belonged, not under his present proposals, but under his abandoned proposals. On every single occasion he still spoke as if those proposals were before the House and the country, and he (the speaker) wanted now to ask him, once and for all, to give them in black and white a statement as to whether he was going to abolish the Militia or not. It was time they knew that. If he were not going to do it directly—and they were told that there was an Imperial sentiment in the country which would not permit of its being done—there was a danger that he would do it indirectly. There were other ways of doing it besides the direct way, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he was accomplishing that end pretty well as it was. He could not get officers, and he could not get men to join the force, and he would not be able to do so so long as the Sword of Damocles was hanging over its head. When he told them that the force was under-officered, and that they could not get the right men to join, the proper reply to that was that the right hon. Gentleman himself was largely the cause of that state of affairs. He was going indirectly the right way to work to abolish the Militia force.

The right hon. Gentleman told them that in five or six months, or perhaps, in eight or nine months, he was going to start the home territorial battalions for a short-service Army. Now, was he going to start those home battalions in regimental districts in direct competition with existing Militia units? If so, he ventured to say that indirectly again the right hon. Gentleman was using a very strong weapon against the Militia force, a weapon which must eventually destroy it. Those who were in that force believed that they did some useful service to the country by taking some part in the defence of these shores, and he did think that they had some claim to obtain from the right hon. Gentleman something more than mere equivocation as to what his real intentions were. The Militia officers would like to know whether he was going to treat them as he and his predecessors successfully treated the Imperial Yeomanry, namely, improving them so as to make them a really valuable force.

He was sure his right hon. friend would believe him when he said he was making no personal attack upon him, but he objected to his whole scheme of Army reform so far as it related to the Auxiliary Forces, and he objected also to the attitude which the right hon. Gentleman constantly adopted towards those forces. The right hon. Gentleman was entirely on the wrong tack with regard to the Auxiliary Forces. He seemed to think that these forces should be made as like the Line as possible. As the country had not got conscription, and he was disposed to think would never get it [OPPOSITION cheers], the course which ought to be adopted was to avail to the fullest extent of the national spirit and desire to serve in the Auxiliary Forces. Every man physically fit who presented himself for the Volunteers, the Yeomanry, or the Militia should be taken and the best made of him, and those forces should be used as schools for training the potential soldier for service abroad. The whole lesson taught them by the South African War was that the Auxiliary only partly trained, but who had learned the elements of soldiering, had acquired some discipline, and knew how to use the rifle, very soon developed into a trained soldier. When, therefore, in times of peace the men came forward in order to acquire training, they ought to avail themselves of their services, and it would be all the better for the country when it was in a condition of warfare, and when it was necessary to send large forces abroad. He thought that the attitude which the right hon. Gentleman took up towards the Auxiliary Forces was a most unfortunate one. He was constantly telling the House that the Militia was not as good as the Line. Of course, they all knew that. He told them, too, that they could not put troops into the field against a Regular Army with such training only as Militiamen obtained.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I did not say so. I quoted the authority of military experts.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: Did not the right hon. Gentleman father the statement?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I adopted it.

MR. CHURCHILL: What is the difference?

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said if the right hon. Gentleman did not father it he had adopted it, and adoption had generally been considered as very much the same thing as fathering. However, they might take it that the right hon. Gentleman agreed with the statement, and he did not suppose that any of his military advisers or anybody else thought they should send Militia into the firing line directly war broke out. Surely, what they would do would be to call them out, give them several months training, and then they would be in a proper condition to do credit to themselves and to their country. He was told that it took the Japanese two or three months to make a soldier. Might it not be thought that a thoroughly trained Volunteer, Militiaman, or Yeoman, in two or three months would make a soldier? Of course he would. He would make a soldier much more quickly, because he had had a partial training in the

Auxiliary Forces, than if he were a raw lad from the plough who had never done any sort of military work. The right hon. Gentleman had instituted what was a most extraordinary comparison between the Militia and the Line. He said that in the case of the Line, if they left behind the immature lads, those lads would grow up to be old enough and strong enough to be sent abroad. Did not Militiamen grow up? Were they the only people who never got any older?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to say that lads joined the Militia a year younger.

MR. CHURCHILL: You are breaking your own rules.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said he fancied the War Office were breaking their own rules, but, after all, granting that they were taken a year younger, young men of sixteen or seventeen grew up by degrees, and as they were not to be in the front line, and not even in the first Reserve, if the war was to be a long one, and if they were going to fill up the wastage year after year, the growing Militiaman would become in time as useful a soldier as the Linesman. The Secretary of State had stated that they had to leave behind the 30 or 40 per cent. of Volunteers who were medically unfit or, from other reasons, inefficient. It was strange that if the percentage was so high 51,000 Militiamen served in South Africa. He believed they served with considerable credit. At any rate, they did not discredit themselves more than any other branch of the service. Did they prove themselves any more unfit than the other forces in the field, or was any complaint made that they were unfit to go through the toils of the campaign? The hon. Member for King's Lynn said they surrendered.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg pardon, I said nothing of the sort. I suggested that in addition to the Questions the hon. Gentleman was putting, he should ask whether they surrendered.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said they would not go into that. He did not think the percentage of the Militia who surrendered was higher than that of other branches. The right hon. Gentleman had said that they were not old enough to go to India. He did not know that it was proposed under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme that they should be sent to India. What he said was that for the purpose of the war in South Africa and other wars in which we might be engaged, the Militiamen would prove themselves to be as fit for the hardships of a campaign as the men of any other branch of the service. He did not wish to say anything disparaging of any branch of the service, but he did not believe that the Auxiliary Forces were worse in those respects to which reference had been made than the Line regiments. The remarks of the right hon. Gentleman applied as much to the Regular Army as to the Militia and the Volunteers.

The House wanted to know what the right hon. Gentleman was going to do. Was he still going to try to destroy the Militia force, and, if not, what were his proposals? The right hon. Gentleman had a truly wonderful scheme considering the views he held in regard to the Militia. It was proposed that they should be enlisted for compulsory foreign service. If they were so unfit as the right hon. Gentleman would have the House to believe, why were they now asked to serve compulsorily abroad? The right hon. Gentleman's plan was first to prove that they were unfit to serve abroad and then to say that they must. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman what were the views of most Militia officers of the proposal. They had proved their willingness to serve abroad. As to making foreign service compulsory, they should not object if at the same time reasonable proposals were made for improving the force and making it really efficient. But so long as they were to be treated as mere impediments in the way of rational Army reform, he did not see why they should undertake the additional obligation while nothing was to be done to put them in a state of efficiency.

There was a great deal that could be done. The Secretary of State had complained that the critics of his proposals made no suggestions of a constructive character which he might use for the purpose of improving the force. He would, therefore, make one or two proposals. In the first place he would say reduce the establishment where the establishment was too large—reduce the number of battalions and make the number more or less commensurate with the number of recruits they got. Instead of having 120 battalions as now, he would be content with sixty strong and efficient battalions divided over various parts of the Kingdom. In the second place, he would lengthen the training, though he did not think that could be done very much, considering the voluntary character of the service. He thought the recruit service could be largely lengthened. It would be an immense improvement to lengthen the ordinary training to six weeks and the men's training to six months. One training out of every three should be devoted entirely to musketry. Under the present arrangements there was not time to attend properly to musketry and also to field training. In the third place they wanted more permanent staff. They were supposed to have two staff sergeants to a company. There might be companies which had them but they did not as a rule have them in his battalion. That was not the fault of the Militia but of the War Office, who did not give the staff they were supposed to give. He thought something ought to be done in regard to non-commissioned officers, who were a weak spot in the force. Inducements should be given to enable them to go to schools of instruction to learn their work. The great complaint the right hon. Gentleman made was that they were merely getting recruits for the Line, and that very few recruits remained with the Militia. That was a strange complaint, even from the right hon. Gentleman's own point of view. What was to become of the recruiting of the Line but for the Militia? He could tell the right hon. Gentleman the reason why the recruits went on to the Line. It was because they were trained at the Line depots The adjutant of the Militia was also the adjutant of the Line, and it was his object to induce those whom he trained to go into the Line. The adjutants were one month with the Militia and eleven months with the Line, and while, as he knew, some were absolutely loyal to the Militia. the fact remained that the greater part of their duty was to look after the Line.

Lastly, he said, without wishing to hurt the right hon. Gentleman, that he should adopt a slightly more courteous attitude. He did not believe the right hon. Gentleman intended to be discourteous, but it would be well if he did not invariably give the opinion that he wished the Militia were at the bottom of the deep blue sea. He felt deeply in regard to the way the Militia had been treated. If they destroyed that force—and they ran the risk of doing it—they would destroy an instrument which had been of great value in the past and might be of even greater service in the future.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said that people who criticised the proposals of the Secretary of State did not always keep in view the difference between the Regular Army and the Auxiliary Forces in relation to their liability for foreign service. He had read the Report of the Commission on the South African War and the evidence on which the Report was founded, and he felt, as an old soldier, that the Army had, to a certain extent, been made the scapegoat of faults that belonged to the Civil Service system of government in this country, and the relationship of the Army to that system. He found from the Report that the preparations for the war were delayed for political reasons. The effect of that was that the Boers invaded Natal six days before the Reservists for the infantry battalions had to meet at home—6,000 miles away. The Army had to be sent out to South Africa in fragments, the ships for the infantry were ready first, and no complete body was formed abroad as should have been done had time permitted. The late Lord Salisbury accurately described the situation when he said that our system of government was not adapted for the making of war. That might be said of any system of government which was well adapted for domestic legislation. They could not entirely alter that system, but they could modify it.

He thought very great credit was due to the Government for forming the Defence Committee. In that way he believed our civil system could be modified with regard to questions relating to war. After war was declared in South Africa the mobilisation worked admirably. The rapidity with which the divisions were sent one after another to the Cape prevented insurrection and saved the situation until, eventually, Lord Roberts was enabled to roll back the tide of war, and, by the aid of the patriotism of this country and the Colonies, it was possible to bring the campaign to a successful conclusion. The Army was organised to send out 70,000 or 80,000 men at that time, there was no reason for thinking that it could not have sent out this force properly staffed and equal in efficiency to a similar force of one of the great Powers. But there were sent out more than three times that number. There was a breaking point to iron, and he thought it did not at all follow that our Army was so bad as the country as a whole seemed to think.

What were the lessons of the war? The first was the necessity of having a force which could be sent out at once, as a force was sent to Canada in 1860. That force we had not in the South African War. The next was the necessity for strong Reserves. Those we had during the South African War, and owing to the rapidity with which division followed division to the Cape we succeeded in preventing insurrection there. Those strong Reserves were due to the Cardwell system as amended, the last amendment having been made when Mr. Smith was at the War Office. That system had been thoroughly tried, and, with improvements which could be made he thought it suited exactly the needs of this country. If a force of infantry was maintained at home equal to the force abroad, the battalions at home formed a "setting" for training the Auxiliary Forces, and the quality of the Army would be maintained. A considerable force must be maintained in this country if non-commissioned officers were to be found for the Auxiliary Forces. The idea in many minds seemed to be to dispense with a large proportion of that equal force of Regular infantry abroad and at home, and to rely upon the blue-water theory. It had always been considered that a force could not be landed if opposed, but it was difficult to be sure that the naval opposing force would be there. Even in regard to such a matter as the defence of the Thames Lord Nelson gave the following order—

> "Stationary floating batteries are not from any apparent advantage to be moved, for the tide may prevent their resuming the very important stations assigned to them."

Captain Mahan's comment on that order was that—

> "Nelson was evidently alive to that advantage in permanent works which puts it out of the power of panic to stampede them."

In the present day, with torpedo boats and destroyers, submarines and so on, there was greater opportunity for defending the coast, but marine defence might be sent or decoyed away. The danger was not so much the landing of a great force with the idea of taking London, as an attack upon one of our great naval ports from the land side. Wellington stated the case very clearly when he wrote to Sir Robert Peel—

> "I put the hypothetical case of the enemy landing 25,000 men near one of our great naval arsenals, attacking, succeeding in taking, and destroying the arsenal. This hypothesis is not the representation of an impossibility, or even extravagant, considering what I have seen done myself, having at the time superior armies in the field opposed to me. In this case you would not have a man. . . . If a body of troops were landed in the neighbourhood of one of our places of a sufficient force to invest the place, say 25,000, then I defy all the Fleets of England to save it without the assistance of an Army in the field. I entreat you to weigh all this well.

He would like to know what were the views on that danger of Admiral Richards, who was the First Naval Lord at a critical time, and of whom Lord Goschen had the highest opinion.

Then, what improvements were necessary in the Army? The first was that by improved pay which had been given the Secretary of State should be enabled to get recruits of eighteen years of age, or its equivalent, of fair standard. Five feet three inches was too low to get the men in time of peace. The second improvement was that every drilled soldier whom his commanding officer wished to take, and his medical officer permitted to proceed, should go on service, and the third was that Reservists away from their regiments for more than two years should be called up for a very short time. With regard to the statement of the Secretary of State he gave the right hon. Gentleman credit for having turned a deaf ear to the idea of separating the Auxiliary Forces from the Army. In time of stress the Militiamen, the Volunteers, and the infantry soldiers were simply soldiers of their King and country. The Army must be one and indivisible. But he differed very strongly from the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the infantry. The Secretary of State evidently saw the necessity of a striking force and of strong Reserves, but the proposed method would, in his opinion, sap the quality of the British infantry. The home service of the foreign Army would not be enough. If the Army was left abroad too much officers and men would deteriorate. The proposed home battalions would, he thought, be very feebly organised. Unless the recruits were taken at eighteen they would probably be lost altogether. He was glad, therefore, that the necessity of finding the Indian drafts had obliged the right hon. Gentleman to postpone these proposals. It had always struck him that if a certain number of Volunteer officers and men engaged to join a provisional Volunteer battalion of a brigade or district for war service it would give the Volunteers a much better chance of working to advantage and of being useful to the country, and he strongly recommended Volunteers to consider that suggestion.

With regard to the Militia, a small force of territorial Militia must be kept, as a large number of men enlisted in the Militia and then went into the Line who would not enlist in the Line straight away. He was inclined to think that the recent rules laid down with regard to localising records was a mistake, and that it would lead to considerably more correspondence than the present system. With regard to economy, he thought a large portion of the cost of the Army ought to be shared by the Navy, and as the Secretary of State had served at the Admiralty he might very well consider whether the Army was really so expensive as was generally supposed. He was strongly of opinion that the improved Cardwell system should be maintained, and that there should be grafted on to it the proposal for two years service at home and Reserve service which would, he thought, succeed.

MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said the greater part of the discussion on Votes A and 1 had been devoted to the Militia and Volunteers, but he desired to speak on the question of the Yeomanry, in which he had served for about forty years. The Secretary of State claimed to have effected a considerable improvement in that force by a reduction of its numbers——

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: By a reduction in its establishment, not in its numbers. The numbers of the Yeomanry have been increased.

MR. TOMKINSON (continuing) said the right hon. Gentleman had failed to point out that the reduction followed very closely upon the considerable increase of establishment made in the first flush of the enthusiasm for mounted forces in connection with the Boer War, which, with the judicious increase of pay, chiefly in the form of a £5 grant to every man who brought a good horse, led to such a sudden and gratifying increase in the numbers of the force. What were the chief lessons of the Boer War? The first was the extreme usefulness—in fact, the necessity—of having a large proportion of mounted men. He believed there had never been a war before in which one army had to meet another consisting entirely of mounted men, and the experience of that campaign showed how extremely difficult it was to defeat such a force. The second lesson was that intelligence, coupled with bravery, knowledge of local conditions, celerity of movement, and ability to seize upon important positions, were worth more than all the Red-books and red-tape of the War Office put together. There ought to be a large increase in mounted troops in order to supply a proportion for the Regular

Forces of cavalry on foreign service. That was the great *desideratum* to be aimed at.

His own experience was that the increase of the establishment up to 501 rank and file was an absolute success. In his county they recruited easily and speedily up to the full *quota*. If it was urged that there was only comparatively a small proportion of Yeomanry to the Volunteers in South Africa he would reply that that was only natural, because the Yeomanry up to that time was a territorial, if not a feudal, force, composed largely of farmers, and in many cases of middle-aged men who were the last men to volunteer for foreign service. But now that was all changed, and they got a much better, younger, and active class of man, and they were the very class who came forward in such gratifying numbers and formed a splendid force, which was one of the best that ever left the shores of this country. He thought it was a great pity that they had been cut down from 501 to 401. The last Return showed a very slight increase upon the whole number, namely, 27,000, but in his own regiment they were still ninety-nine over strength. The question was, were they a cheap and valuable force and worth keeping up? Their total cost was about £16 per head, and a mere increase in the rank and file would not increase the total in proportion, because the same staff and head office expenses would prevail. He felt sure that the country would never turn itself into a blue-water school, and the people would never consent to see this country denuded of its troops and would never trust itself entirely to the Navy. He could not accept the view that in the event of any disaster to the Navy, and our hores being left undefended, England's liberty and fortunes would be gone. That assumption was unworthy of the great heritage to which they had succeeded, and a most unworthy sentiment to come from the lips of any Englishman.

*Major EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said he wished to make a few remarks in reply to the speech made by the hon. Member for Tunbridge. In his somewhat unnecessarily acrimonious attack upon the Secretary of State for War, he made one statement in which he said that the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the present unsatisfactory state of the Militia.

Major SEELY: Hear, hear!

*Major EVANS GORDON said that whatever view hon. Gentlemen opposite might hold about the proposals before the Committee he did not think a statement of that kind could possibly be justified. The present Secretary of State for War came into office not very long ago, and he found the Militia in the condition described by the Royal Commission. Absolute unanimity of evidence upon that Commission showed the Militia to be in a disgraceful state, and it was reported that they had been steadily dwindling away. It was also stated that this was due to the want of officers and to the constant drain upon the Militia by its best men passing into the Line. All those things had existed long before the present Secretary of State for War had anything to do with the Militia. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out the true facts, and to hold him responsible for the condition of things which, according to the Report of the Royal Commission, had existed for over twenty years, seemed to be most unfair and most unjust.

Major SEELY: The right hon. Gentleman has made it worse.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said what he had stated was that the Secretary of State had not made things any better.

*Major EVANS GORDON repeated that what the hon. Member for Tunbridge stated was that the evils of the Militia were largely due to the action of the right hon. Gentleman. [Cries of "Hear, hear!"] That statement was utterly unjustifiable. Lord Wolseley had said that for the last twenty years the Militia had been used as a sort of nursery for the Line and had taken away its best men. How could the right hon. Gentleman be responsible for that? It was really most unfair to fasten these things upon the right hon. Gentleman. After the hon. Member for Tunbridge had completed his attacks, much to his joy and certainly to his astonishment, he suggested certain definite reforms. One of them was that the Militia should be turned into a substantive self-contained force, and should not be a mere nursery for the Line. But that was one of the proposals which the Secretary of State for War had constantly been making. Then his hon. friend went on to say that there were too many battalions of Militia and that they were badly distributed. Again this was the very thing that his right hon. friend had pointed out over and over again, for he had stated that in order to improve the Militia they must reduce the redundant battalions, concentrate them, and with the money so saved improve the force and make it a really efficient fighting unit of the British Army. The Secretary of State had used the same arguments and the same scheme with regard to the Volunteers.

Hon. Members on both sides of the House had said that they were unable to understand what the Secretary of State proposed to do with regard to the Volunteers. He was rather surprised that they should make such an admission with regard to the weakness of their own powers of comprehension. In his opinion it was not so much incapacity but unwillingness to understand anything that the right hon. Gentleman said which had led them to make that statement. Nothing could be more absolutely clear than the statement which the Secretary of State for War made yesterday with regard to the Volunteers. He could not conceive why hon. Members were so unwilling to face the facts borne witness to by almost every witness who came before the different Commissions, namely, that there were in the Volunteers and in the Militia numbers of men whom no amount of taining would turn into efficient soldiers. What in the name of fortune was the use of maintaining and paying for such men as that? [Cries of "Agreed."] He rejoiced to think that they were agreed. Let them reduce those redundant numbers and pay only for the men who were likely to become fit to bear arms in time of war. If that was done they would have a really efficient Militia force on the lines suggested by the hon. Member for Tunbridge and an efficient Volunteer force as well, and they would be able to supply both those forces with all those requirements which were absolutely essential, and which would enable them to become efficient fighting units of the Army. He had been amazed to hear the bias introduced into the criticisms which had been levelled against the proposals made by the right hon. Gentleman, whose scheme seemed to him common sense, and was perfectly clear to anyone who really wished to understand it. For his part he was glad to have the opportunity of standing up and giving the right hon. Gentleman in his most difficult task all the support he could possibly give.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said he wished to say a few words upon the financial aspect of this question. In the course of this long, interesting. and instructive debate they had hardly had a word said about the great increase in the Estimates. The increase in Vote 1 alone amounted to £500,000, and there was upon the whole Estimates an increase of £983,000. But even that did not exhaust the subject, because this year they had for the last time large windfalls to the War Office at the conclusion of the war. The result of the right hon. Gentlemen's arrangements were that this increase of £983,000 brought the Army expenditure up to £29,813,000. If they added to that total the £33,389,000 for the Navy the sum total expenditure for the fighting forces of this country came to £63,202,000. If there was one thing more than another upon which the country had made up its mind it was in relation to this great growth in the expenditure upon the Army. Both in the House of Commons and in the constituencies they had enlarged upon that theme, and they would be doing a great injustice to their opinions if they did not now enter their protest against increasing Army expenditure by voting for this reduction. They had some very important allies in this matter, for Lord Lansdowne had stated in the other House that our naval and military expenditure had become a serious menace to the financial stability of this country, and that the Government had to consider how to arrest the progress of that colossal expenditure. His Lordship further stated that the Government should if possible avoid any increase in the Army Estimates. Now the Secretary of State for War was proposing an increase in the Army Estimates of £983,000. Not very long ago the Secretary for War himself stated that they must have a reduction of expenditure on the Army and they must have greater efficiency, and that there was no way of arriving at this except by cutting down the number of men. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "My ambition is to lay the foundation of a scheme which will enable my successors to effect progressive economies in Army expenditure."

No doubt that was the right hon. Gentleman's ambition, but that ambition could not be gratified, because next year a large sum would have to be expended on the rearmament of the Horse and Field Artillery. This year only fifty-four batteries had to be provided, but next year seventy-six would have to be provided for. Then there was a large expenditure to be provided for the cadets at Sandhurst, and the Committee must remember there would not then be these windfalls that might have been utilised to meet the expenditure this year. The Committee would remember that the charge on the Estimates for the rearmament of the horse and field batteries was £1,133,000, and he thought he could show without adding these windfalls other sums that would very nearly provide for that armament. In the first place there was the excess of the Clothing Vote left over from the war, £344,000, then the completion of the Mowatt programme for reserves of guns, £400,000, and the surplus from small arms, the armaments unexpended in South Africa, £217,000. Those amounts totalled to £961,000. The usual plan of manœuvres appeared to have been abandoned, and the saving attributable to that was represented by £21,000 for hired transport and £36,000 in respect of "Railway and and damage to property." There had also been a decrease of £60,000 on sea transport and £65,000 on remounts. If these amounts were added to the £961,000 the total came to £1,143,000. Therefore the rearmament of the horse and field batteries could have been provided for without additional expense, and there would still be £10,000 to the good. These exceptional windfalls, he maintained, should be set against exceptional expenditure, but they had all been used up to meet the steady growth of normal Votes which would recur next year when, there being no windfalls, the Estimates must go up.

Another thing which he much regretted was that after all the promises of economy they had from the Esher Committee and the adoption of the proposals of that Committee by the right hon. Gentleman, there was to be an increase of £47,000 in the expenditure of the War Office itself. That ought to be taken a note of, because in Part III the Esher Committee said—

> "We are convinced that efficiency and economy are unattainable until the War Office has been completely reconstituted in accordance with the principles we have laid down."

There were doubts as to whether the War Office had been made efficient, but there could be no doubt as to the economy. We were paying £50,000 more in salaries at the War Office than before. The Report continued—

> "We are convinced that, in spite of a necessary and most desirable increase in the cost of the branch under the Chief of the General Staff, our proposals will lead to a reduction of expenditure in the administration of the Army."

The right hon. Gentleman had said we ought to get rid of everything redundant. Would he consider the reduction of the Guards, the numbers of which were a few years ago raised from 5,800 to 8,200 in order that they might take part in the duty at the Mediterranean garrisons. That was not found, however, to be popular with the Guards and the duty was abandoned. When the duty was abandoned, the numbers should have been reduced, because they had no duties to perform other than those they had before, and they were precisely the kind of force upon which, without lessening in any respect the efficiency of the army, the Secretary of State could exercise a wise economy; they had a three years service and a very powerful Reserve and could go out to war 1,000 strong without difficulty. Indeed they did so when called upon at the time of the

Crimea, whilst from their perfect drill they required less stiffening. They found no drafts for India and no colonial garrisons. Recruiting had gone on better for the simple reason that they were the only short-service men in the Army, but the Inspector-General's Report said—

> "The recruiting for the Foot Guards, while showing a slight increase, has been unsatisfactory, as the recruits obtained have not been sufficient to bring the several regiments up to their proper establishments."

By such a reduction the expenditure would be reduced by £150,000.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): At the expense of the most efficient branch of the service.

*Sir A. HAYTER said that would not be so. He proposed to reduce the men in the ranks and increase the Reserve. It appeared to him that it was a gross injustice that India should be called upon to pay every shilling of the expense of the enormous garrison in that country when Egypt was not called upon to do the same. The garrison in Egypt cost £500,000, of which Egypt paid £87,000. According to the Estimates that amount had now been increased to £100,000, which left on the Estimates an expenditure of £300,000 after the late reduction of garrison. Why should Egypt pay only one-third. It was a flourishing country with a surplus of revenue last year of £750,000 which had increased this year to £1,000,000, and it was a great injustice to the native subjects of India to make them pay the whole cost whilst Egypt was let off with £100,000. If she paid for her garrison we should save £200,000. Then there was a saving of £30,000 on the Yeomanry, and the contribution from Local Governments for the garrisons at Halifax and Esquimalt by which the Estimates benefited to the amount of £170,000. Those amounts were together £500,000 which, added to the £1,143,000, made £1,643,000 of exceptional windfalls.

One word about organisation. The Secretary of State boasted that the long-service system had produced 11,000 recruits in the last few months, but very exceptional causes contributed to that result. The whole result was attributable to the fact that the recruits had no option but to join the infantry, other arms, owing to their surplus, being closed, and to the fact that industrial difficulty was military opportunity. No one who had seen the crowds of men who were out of work with nothing between them and starvation would be surprised that many of those men should have enlisted. But it was difficult to believe that men would continue to give their services to the country from the age of nineteen to the age of twenty-eight, and then come back with only three years in the Reserve. He regretted that with the cavalry the right hon. Gentleman should have reverted to the old depot system instead of sending recruits at once to their regiments.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to say it was not the old system, but one of a totally different character.

*Sir A. HAYTER said, of course, he could not know what the future arrangements as to the depots were to be—but he could not see the use of setting up these depots if the men were to be sent away at the end of three months. The home Army was to be provided by men of two years service. Out of the 500 men who were to form the battalion they would have to deduct barrack guard picket, sick and fatigue men, servants and cooks, and he thought any one who had commanded a battalion would think himself very fortunate if he got 400 men on parade. He said that two years service was too short a time to make a man perfect in his drill, and he did not think the Government ought to allow such a short term. In conclusion, he wished to urge that the House should not settle the strength of the Army of this country upon the basis of any apprehension they might have in regard to Russia and Afghanistan. Russia had been put back twenty years by this war, and any country which had lost £250,000,000 and lives which were counted by the thousand and thousand would be crippled for many years to come. They should, therefore, settle the strength of the Army on the basis of the needs of the country and not embark upon an enormous expenditure through any apprehensions of a Russian chimera.

*General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haversfordwest) said he had been one of the keenest supporters of the Secretary for War in his advocacy of the reorganisation of the Army. He had worn the King's uniform for fifty-five years and had always had a great interest in the Army, which he still retained and, like many others, he hoped the Secretary of State for War had been misunderstood when he was said to have denounced the old officers of the Army as being the men who were his greatest enemies in regard to Army organisation. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman could have meant it, because officers looked upon him as their truest and warmest friend and had given him every assistance in the past in their desire to improve the Army, and they could not believe that he would now denounce them. [Laughter and cries of "He did."] Well, he hoped and tried to believe that he was misunderstood. There had been very little said in this debate about the Regular Army. He had always understood that there were three classes which could be drawn upon to furnish our military forces—those who could become professional soldiers; those who could give a portion of their time consecutively—the Militia; and those who could give an afternoon each week—the Volunteers. What they were trying to do now, however, was to make the Volunteer into a poor Militiaman and the Militiaman into a poor Regular soldier.

What was the position of the Regular Army at this moment? Were they dealing with linked battalions or not, and how were drafts to be furnished? The Secretary for War had told them that battalions from which drafts were taken year after year were nothing but "squeezed lemons." Now 200 men were to be taken off their strength and they would be more squeezed than ever. The same number of drafts would have to be furnished, but there would be very few men left to form the nucleus of the battalion itself. It had been contended that we should be able to get back to the short-service system in a very few months. He failed to see it. From an Answer to a Question put the other day it appeared that the wastage of the Army from sickness, discharges, etc., was 10,000 a year, and the Indian drafts were 15,000—a total of 25,000 long-service men wanted every year. That did not leave much margin for the short-service men going into the Reserve. His impression, therefore, was that it would be not three or four months but as many years before they were likely to pass back to the short-service system. He thought it was exceedingly undesirable to have such a number of terms of service prevailing in the same battalion. His experience of such a system at the time of the Crimean War with four different terms of enlistment was that an officer never knew when the terms of service of his men were coming to an end. If there was to be a change could we not return to the condemned system of seven and five years. The two-years men joining the service at seventeen and leaving at nineteen would be hardly broken in to discipline, and if they had nine years in the Reserve he would be very sorry to take a battalion made up largely of such men into the field towards the end of that period after spending eight or nine years in civil life. Such men would not recognise the authority of the non-commissioned officers. As to the recruits, he had ascertained that out of 1,000 boys enlisted for the Navy, 800 became effective "A.B's" and the total sum spent on making them efficient was £240 per man. He was very curious to know what the corresponding figures for the Army were. He believed not nearly so many recruits for the Army became effectives, and the cost he thought would be as great. He suggested that it would be better to take boys for the Army as we now took them for the Navy, and in the end we should save by it.

Coming to the question of the shortage of officers, there was one difficulty that Army officers had to which the officers in the Navy were not subject. The naval officer when he went on board ship had an effective sailor given over to him who had passed through the training ship, but the Army officer got raw recruits and had to make effective soldiers out of them himself. That being so the Army officer ought to have a greater opportunity of being with his men than he possessed. There was a rumour that a great number of resignations of officers were in the hands of the War Office. There were many reasons to account for it, for officers did not get a fair chance. Formerly there was an appeal from the commanding officer to the Military Secretary, but now the officer was not allowed to go near the War Office at all, and consequently the commanding officer commanded the future of every man serving under him. There was no appeal whatever, and officers, therefore, complained that there was no encouragement to remain in the service. Again, officers were called on to pass examination up to middle life, and if they failed were removed from the service too old to commence a new career and too young to drop active life and that discouraged men who might otherwise choose the Army as a profession.

Mr. GUEST (Plymouth) said that the other day the Secretary for War complained that there was no reality in the debate, but he was not concerned to pay too much attention to that phrase coming from a member of a Government which depreciated and deprecated public discussion. If there had been any unreality it was due to the solitary position which the Secretary for War had occupied rather than to any lack of point in the criticism directed against his scheme. What hon. Members had been trying to discover was not so much the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman himself as the policy of the Government in regard to Army matters. So long as the whole thing was in a sort of mist or shadow-land—so long as they did not know how much had been sanctioned and how much had been rejected by the Government—it had been impossible to make this debate as useful as it would otherwise have been. The value of Parliamentary debates was not always sufficiently apparent at the time; it took some time for what was said to filtrate into the country, to be digested there, and to be returned in the form of public opinion. Strong attacks were made two years ago on the scheme of the present Secretary for India when he was at the War Office, and he daresay that it might have been felt then that the debates were very inconclusive and that there was a certain amount of unreality about them. The Prime Minister, with his matchless dialectics, stood up and from his point of view destroyed all the observations which had been put before the Committee, but if they looked to-day at the position we now occupied in military matters as compared with the position we occupied then he did not think that they would find that we were in any better position. They had eliminated for all practical purposes the system of linked battalions; short service had been abandoned for the purposes of the foreign Army and they had reached also some points of agreement in matters of general policy. All were agreed that we now enjoyed practical immunity from foreign invasion. Inasmuch as that was admitted it was also generally admitted that we could do with a smaller foreign-service Army; that was to say, a smaller force on which the general every day duty fell. They also agreed that over and above the Regular Army for ordinary purposes we required something in the nature of an emergency Army upon which we could rely when face to face with some great emergency, such as being called upon to defend our Indian frontier, though it was admitted that the danger of an invasion of our Indian Empire had much diminished by events in the Far East. It was of great importance that agreement should be reached upon these points, because it was only by agreement on the principle underlying this policy that they would be able to make progress. Nothing would be accomplished so long as one Secretary of State proceeded to undermine the policy of his predecessor, because there would be a want of that aspiration and loyalty in the Department itself without which the fine phrases used in this House would never be converted into real reforms.

It was admitted that economies could and should be made, but the House was presented with Estimates larger by nearly a million than had ever been presented before. In spite of exceptional windfalls and advantages the Estimates had advanced year after year, and it was because of the contradiction of the promises by the performance, of the theory by the practice, that there had been a general condemnation from all sides of the House of the scheme put forward by the right hon. Gentleman. It took two years to destroy the scheme of the Secretary of State for India, but the scheme of his successor had been in existence for less than six months and it had been hissed off the stage, laughed out of Court. Its condemnation was not surprising. The Secretary of State proposed to continue two schemes which were mutually destructive each of the other, one of which he admitted was good, the other bad. He proposed to continue the Militia in its present state, but told the House that his proposal of a short-service Army was inconsistent with the retention of the Militia in its present shape. How could the right hon. Gentleman hope to carry out his scheme when there were such fundamental differences. As to the Auxiliary Forces upon which we had to rely on occasions of great emergency, the House knew perfectly well the right hon. Gentleman considered the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers were incapable of performing their functions in defence of this country. The right hon. Gentleman preferred a professional force to the Auxiliary Forces, but they thought it was possible to improve the Auxiliary Forces and give to them the strength they desired them to have. The right hon. Gentleman desired to sweep them away and replace them by short-service men. The right hon. Gentleman did not think they were even good enough to maintain lines of communication. But so far as India was concerned it was not so much maintaining lines of communication as keeping order and freeing the Regular Army for service in the field. The right hon. Gentleman did not think they were very desirable, and appeared to hold the opinion that one pressed man was worth ten volunteers; he desired to extend the Militia and turn it into a sort of second-class Regular Army, if he might so describe it. The right hon. Gentleman wished to create a short-service territorial Army, which would not occupy, in its own opinion or that of anyone else, the position of the long-service foreign Army. And that was the service he preferred to that which the Auxiliary Forces could furnish. That was the view of the War Minister in this House, and he did not think it was disrespectful of him to say that that was a view the House ought to accept with reserve. The War Minister was the advocate of the military view, and the very qualities which qualified him for the post he filled debarred him from taking a patriotic view of this question. He not only desired to have the best Army he could out of the materials at his disposal but also the biggest Army. But the House had to decide as to the main policy of the Minister, and he submitted that the Auxiliary Forces were the proper material for the emergency Army and that they would be able to perform the duties required of them.

When the right hon. Gentleman introduced his scheme in the previous year he quoted from the Report of the Royal Commission certain portions destined to show how worthless the Auxiliary Forces were. He observed that the first quotation the right hon. Gentleman used was that the average Militia battalion was not fit to take part in a field expedition force until some months after they had joined their battalion. It could be seen that the Secretary of State was not a warm friend of the Auxiliary Forces, out of which we could get a larger Army in times of emergency and which were composed of better material than the short-service men he desired to put in their place. He submitted that the Auxiliary Forces formed just the sort of Army which it was desirable to have for that purpose, and which should be encouraged in this country. The right hon. Gentleman was doubtful as to the extent to which they could be relied upon in an emergency. The patriotism of the people of this country was proportionate to the popularity of the war, and the emergency to which it gave rise. If it was understood that no considerable military expedition would be undertaken without the warm support and patriotic enthusiasm of the people two very desirable results would accrue. Aggressive policies, such as those involving expeditions to Somaliland and Tibet, would be discouraged, greatly to the advantage of the public service; and a sense of responsibility would be engendered in those people who were prone to go about giving vent to that music-hall Jingoism which had pushed the country into many dangerous positions, and which in itself was one of the greatest menaces to the peace of the Empire. One of the reasons most Continental countries were more peaceable than they used to be was that every man knew that in case of war he might have to shoulder the musket and take his place in the fighting line, and if the Auxiliary Forces were given to feel a similar responsibility it would act as a deterrent on military enterprise. He believed it was on these lines the House would ultimately find themselves in agreement. These debates had shown a considerable amount of agreement as to military policy to exist, and if the Secretary of State would attempt to extend that agreement instead of pushing the mysterious and more unsympathetic part of his military policy, there would be reason for hoping that the result of the South African War which had broken up our old military system, would in the end create a new and a better policy for the future.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside), speaking as a civilian, thought the Secretary of State had been somewhat hardly used with regard to the size of the Estimates, seeing that last year the right hon. Gentleman stated that the economies he hoped would ensue could not take effect to any great extent this year. Moreover, the Estimates of a year ago showed a considerable reduction on those of the year before. He could not understand why the cost of the new guns should be borne on the Estimates. They represented a large capital expenditure which, in his opinion, should be spread over a period approximating to the life of a gun, whatever that might be, or, say, a term of ten years. He hoped that next week, although the charges were in the Estimates, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would announce his intention of defraying the cost of the rearmament from some other source than revenue—such, for instance, as the unclaimed dividends. One of the greatest statisticians of the age, Sir Robert Giffen, a few years ago calculated that the cost of the Army, even if it amounted to £40,000,000, would not be out of proportion to our commitments, or greater in proportion to the wealth of the nation than were the Army Estimates of 1860. He did not say that the Estimates should amount to anything like that sum, but it was worth bearing in mind what very different views prevailed a few years ago as to the cost of the Army. Any promiscuous cutting down of expenditure was a sure way to extravagance, as it invariably led to reaction. The reference of the hon. Member for Oldham to 1857, when Lord John Russell, Mr. Disraeli, and others put pressure on Lord Palmerston to reduce the Army Estimates, was hardly a happy analogy, as it was in May of that year that the Mutiny broke out. That was an example showing how precipitate attempts at economy produced reaction and diminished the military security of the country.

The scheme of the right hon. Gentleman was complete and logical—perhaps too logical. There was no answer to it if the underlying assumption of the security of the country against invasion were accepted, but he wished the Secretary of State could disclose a little more the reasons which had led the Committee of Defence to accept the conclusions of the blue-water school. Such a disclosure, if it could be made without injury to the public service, would give a great deal of confidence to many people who could not now share the views of that school. He thought the Memorandum of the Secretary of State put the matter rather too absolutely. It did not at all follow that if we lost the command of the sea we should be instantly starved into submission. He remembered the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who certainly was an authority on these matters, saying that an absolute blockade of these islands was an impossibility. But what of the case of a temporary loss of the command of the seas? It was not impossible to suppose that our Channel Squadron might meet with a disaster while the other squadrons remained intact and, given the necessary time, could restore to us the command of the seas. In the event of such a temporary disaster he submitted that it was quite possible that a foreign army might get in to strike that "blow at the heart" of which the late Lord Salisbury spoke some years ago, and reduce this country to terms. Time was of the vital essence of the question. It was not a matter of the Army at home being able to meet and overcome a large foreign army, but of being able to keep a foreign army at bay until the command of the seas was restored. That was a way out of the dilemma represented by the alternatives of the blue-water school or conscription, and he thought they should ask whether the Navy was so absolutely paramount that this country could stake the whole of its future upon it.

Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) submitted that the uncompromising unreality of these Army debates, of which the right hon. Gentleman had complained, was due to the Government and the Government alone. The War Office had accepted the theory of the blue-water school, but they believed that we had become more vulnerable on the Indian frontier, and that we must maintain a comparatively large Army, prepared to go out at any moment to resist an attempt at the gradual absorption of Afghanistan. Assuming for the sake of argument that no impediment existed in the way of getting the troops out, he desired to ask, and the House could not form a rational opinion on the matter until the Question was answered, what were the troops to do when they got to India? The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, who was an authority in these matters, had told them it was the general military opinion that they could not move through the deserts of Afghanistan an Army of 50,000 men with all their furniture and the materials they required to carry with them. He was told that in a much smaller war, in moving 10,000 men, we practically killed all the camels that could be found in Asia except a small number used for breeding. So that the only means of absorbing Afghanistan was by the gradual penetration of the railways. This question was represented to them as being the measure of our needs in regard to our Reserve Army. It was the pivot of the military problem, as he understood it, which they had to consider to-day, and until the House was told how many troops were wanted for this purpose, how they were to get there, what they were to do when they got there, by what means they were to replace them when they left this country, and how they were to provide further troops if the war developed into a life and death struggle; until these matters were explained to them in their wider aspect, he maintained that the Members of the House could not really and rationally decide the questions put before them.

Yesterday afternoon the Prime Minister got up. He gave the closest attention to the right hon. Gentleman's explanation. He hoped that at last they were going to hear something of this matter, which the right hon. Gentleman said was the crux of the whole military problem of the country. They were told by the highest military authority that the Prime Minister was the first Prime Minister since Wellington who could fittingly preside over the deliberations of the Imperial Defence Committee. They were told that the right hon. Gentleman had made a special study of the question of the frontier of India, that he knew the place and that he was thoroughly versed in the problem. Yesterday afternoon the right hon. Gentleman did not show himself a Wellington. He showed himself to be a student of a contemporary of Wellington who said that speech was granted to us in order that we might hide our thoughts. He confessed he listened to that speech with very blank dismay. It was true that the Prime Minister was speaking only on the question of the Volunteers, but it was also true that the Prime Minister told them that they must consider the question of the Volunteers not in isolation from the military problem, which was the crux of the whole question, and this problem affected every branch of the Army.

He took as an instance the question of the Volunteers. The Volunteers were, in the old days, considered to be principally for home defence. Now, as he understood it, the Volunteers were much more likely to be wanted in the future as a force that would be willing to volunteer in time of emergency for service abroad. They were also wanted as a nursery of patriotism. The last purpose they were likely to be wanted for was to repel a force which had crossed the seas and landed on our shores. In regard to the Volunteers they had never been told anything satisfactorily. Last August a Memorandum was placed before them showing how the proposed scheme would affect the Estimates of future years, and that when the scheme was working there would be a saving of £300,000, or 25 per cent., on the Volunteers. They had never had it explained whether the right hon. Gentleman intended to go on in the changes he proposed in the Volunteers. That was one of the fundamental things they wished to know. He had taken the Volunteers as an example, but he might have taken any other part of the Army and pointed out that this question of the Indian frontier affected the whole question of Army organisation.

On the recruiting question—speaking with a knowledge of the labour market—he asserted that the labour market was an essential part of the question of recruiting. In eight or nine months we were to have short-service recruiting opened to men concurrently with long-service recruiting. What would be the result? Long-service recruiting would almost immediately stop, or only a small proportion of men would go in for the long service. They must very soon, then, confine recruiting to long service only. Did the right hon. Gentleman intend to go on altering the system of recruiting from long service to short service and then back again to long service? That seemed to be the course which lay before them under the present conditions. It might succeed as a solution of the question, but it was much more likely to fail.

The right hon. Gentleman had asked them to make suggestions. He had tried to put before the House reasons why it was impossible for them to make suggestions at all. They had never had explained to them what the fundamental military problem was they had to consider. How, then, could they give an answer to these questions? Experts differed on the frontier question. It was for the Government to explain it, and on it depended every problem they were now considering. The House ought never to have been asked to sanction this Vote until the fundamental question lying at the bottom of the problem had been more fully explained to the House.

*MR. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire, Hertford) said he desired for a few minutes to draw attention to a question which vitally affected the constituency he represented, namely, the discharge of a large number of workmen at the Small Arms Factory at Enfield. He thought the attitude of the men in this very critical state of affairs had been altogether a correct one, and he did not think any exaggerated statements had been made on the part of those who were so vitally interested in this matter. They had been told that this hurried action on the part of the War Office had been taken in the interests of economy. Of course they were all in favour of economy in the abstract, until it affected them in some particular matter in which they were interested. There were one or two matters which he desired to press upon the attention of the War Office. In view of the large expenditure which had been incurred at Enfield, and the large establishment which it was necessary to keep up there, and the large sums of money which had been spent and were being spent on buildings in connection with the Small Arms Factory, he thought they had some claim to ask the War Office to consider whether it would not be better to keep the staff employed there at any rate at the normal standard. He thought he was correct in saying that the discharges which had already taken place would reduce the staff below the normal standard which had been maintained for a considerable number of years in the past. Then there was the difficult question of the proportion of orders which ought to be given to Government and private factories. Having regard to the cost of the establishments which the Government kept up he thought this question was worthy of the most careful consideration.

He regretted that the discharges had not been carried out in a more gradual manner. No doubt hon. Members had noticed the letter written by the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to some discharges which took place at the Admiralty dockyards. He said that there was no intention on the part of the Admiralty of discharging any large body of men at one time, and so many were receiving notice week by week in order to cause the men as little inconvenience as possible. He ventured to think that the War Office might have adopted some such system as that rather than discharging 500 or 600 men in the sudden and unexpected way that they did the other day. There were special circumstances connected with the employment of these men at Enfield, which differed very considerably from the circumstances under which the men were employed in the Birmingham factories. At Birmingham if a man was discharged, he probably would be able to get a job on the following day, but the men discharged from the Government factory at Enfield could not find work of the same class anywhere in the neighbourhood. Therefore, in establishing this factory the Government had incurred very grave responsibility. They brought those men into that district, and by suddenly discharging them they not only caused very grave inconvenience and distress, but they also caused great loss to others who were indirectly dependent upon those employed in the factory. Although he was aware that the number employed during the war was in excess of the normal number, still he thought he had a right to ask that the normal number should be maintained. He could assure his right hon. friend and the House that these discharges were causing something like consternation and producing great distress amongst the men concerned, and the wholesale discharge of these men would cause a very serious loss of the capital invested by traders and others who had gone into business in that district. He therefore wished to press this matter very earnestly upon the attention of the Financial Secretary to the War Office.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he very seldom intervened in Army debates, but he would confine himself to one or two points. The Secretary of State for War the other day said there was a great unreality about this debate. That was quite true, and it arose from the fact that they did not know whether the views which the right hon. Gentleman had expressed were his own views or a compromise between his own views and the views of the Government. Therefore they did not know whether what he was telling them was going to be the last word of the Government or not. Another reason was that they were now discussing questions which, although of great importance, were, after all, dependent for their solution upon other questions which the House had not yet been allowed to discuss. They were told by the Prime Minister that these considerations would fall to be discussed when the Vote was taken for the Council of Defence, but was it not putting the cart before the horse that they should discuss these questions now instead of first discussing the general principles about what Imperial defence meant and how it should be provided for? The House ought to have been allowed an opportunity for discussing that question before being asked to deal with the questions they were now considering.

He would illustrate this consideration by stating two points. The first was with regard to the North-West frontier of India. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War had stated that, after all, this was the main danger and difficulty for which we needed to maintain a large striking force. Both of the right hon. Gentlemen had talked as if we should need a force of 200,000 or 300,000 British soldiers who could be despatched to the North-West frontier of India. That seemed to be an extraordinarily large demand. Such a force could only be required in the case of some enormous force from the North-West approaching—an army of 300,000 or 400,000 men at least. Was there the slightest chance of an army of that kind coming to the North-West frontier of India? Those who had been there knew something about it. It was a land of mountain and desert and drought, with nothing like the railway facilities which the Russian Army had in Manchuria. He could not imagine a more difficult country for a foreign army to traverse. Unless some extraordinary want of judgment in policy on our part alienated the Afghans and drove them into the hands of another Power, we might depend upon the people there, who were jealous of their independence. That would be almost sufficient to put the greatest possible difficulty in the way of an approaching force. Surely, if the House were to be asked to prepare for sending a force of 200,000 or 300,000 to defend the North-West frontier of India, they ought to be told what were the circumstances under which such a force might be required. They ought to have a reasoned statement of the views of the Council of Defence which had led them to believe that an enormous force of that kind was required, and they ought also to have the opinion of the Government of India, in whose archives there had been accumulated a great mass of knowledge on the subject. He should like to know whether the Secretary of State for War was prepared to say that the Government of India and their military advisers thought that any contingency could arise in which a force of 200,000 or 300,000 need be sent to India to aid in the defence of that country. The House knew what an enormous sum had been spent on railways and fortifications in that region and what a burden had been laid on the Indian taxpayer in consequence, and really to say that, in addition, this large force was to be prepared was to ask something which they could not take on the *ipse dixit* of the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State. The House must have evidence and an opportunity for discussing it before they could assent to such an extraordinary demand. There never was a moment when the danger of the invasion of India was less imminent than now. They had seen what had happened to the Russian Army in Manchuria and the difficulties which had been imposed on them. Was it likely that another enterprise, even more difficult, would be undertaken by Russia? If it was a distant contingency surely it was the part of wisdom not to prepare now at enormous cost. He did not profess to deliver a positive opinion on this question.

The other illustration he desired to give arose out of the case of the Volunteers. The case for the diminution of the Volunteers was found in the last resort to depend on the proposition which the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister had both advanced, that there was practically no probability whatever of any invasion of this country. All admitted that was a highly improbable contingency. Was it an absolutely impossible contingency, in these days when new methods of warfare were being discovered? He would go so far as to say that it was highly improbable—so improbable that he thought it was well to abandon the idea of the necessity for fortifying London. But was it so absolutely impossible that we should not have the additional security and comfort given by knowing that we had another force at home, which was a basis for recruiting and out of which an efficient Army could be rapidly created if the necessity arose to call upon them? Surely if we could provide an additional force of that kind at a small cost it was the part of prudence to do it. The House wanted, therefore, from the Council of Defence a much more complete statement of their case for declaring invasion to be practically impossible. He was far from being an advocate of militarism in any sense, but he believed there was considerable benefit in having a large force of Volunteers. He was one of the original Volunteers in 1859-60, and he remembered very well the spirit of the country at that time. It was a spirit which said that the citizens of this country ought to be prepared to bear their share of the duties and burdens of citizenship, and that was the spirit which the Volunteers had cherished ever since. He believed every man should be ready to fight for his country if the need arose.

*COLONEL BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield) said he wished to refer to a subject which was of great interest to his constituents, namely, the reduction of expenditure on the manufacture of rifles. Government factories had been built, and rightly so, for the manufacture of rifles, and of course, it had been done at the expense of private firms. At the end of the Crimean War it was found that it was not quite satisfactory to have rifles manufactured by private firms, and the works now at Enfield had been gradually built. There was another small arms factory at Sparkbrook, and it had been common for many years to divide the orders between the two factories and the private trade. Last year India started a rifle factory of her own. He doubted whether in normal times there would now be a sufficient amount of work to keep the Government factories going at Enfield and Sparkbrook and the private factories as well. The House would realise the seriousness of the case at Enfield when he stated that during this financial year something like 75 per cent. of the machinery was lying idle. The district was one which had been entirely built up on account of the requirements of the Royal Small Arms Factory. During the last few years about 3,000 workmen had been employed in the factory. A few months ago there were 2,300 employed, but now the number had been reduced to 1,700. There had not only been this large reduction in the number employed, but those engaged at Enfield and at the sister factory at Sparkbrook had been placed on short time. That meant a loss of something like £60,000 to £70,000 a year in money which otherwise would have been distributed in wages in the neighbourhood of Enfield Lock. The House could easily imagine how hard these places had been hit. If the Government at present desired that only the mounted forces of the country should be armed with the new rifle it was not for these districts to say that rifles which were not needed should be manufactured. The case he wanted to submit to the House was that before new contracts were made with private firms for the manufacture of rifles the War Office should consider the advisability of having the work done in their own factories. The two private firms which manufactured rifles were the Birmingham Small Arms Factory and the London Rifle Company. With the new factory, the large factory at Enfield, and the large accommodation at Sparkbrook we had sufficient scope even in time of war to provide for any emergency which might arise, and when they considered the very large price the Government paid to firms for the manufacture of rifles in private factories, he thought there was a very good reason in a House in which they were all pressing for economy, and when there were only small orders to be given for rifles, that those orders should be divided amongst the Government's own workmen, who ought to have the first benefit in this respect.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said the point raised was rather a small one as compared with the larger issue with which the House had been concerned in the last few days, but he was not surprised that the matter had been referred to. It was not a small matter to hon. Members or those whom they represented, with whom he heartily sympathised. There was no more distasteful duty which could be thrown upon any man than that of dismissing a large number of willing workers from their employment, and no such action would be taken if it were possible to avoid it. The hon. Member had dealt with the Enfield factory alone, but he wanted to deal with the two factories, Enfield and Sparkbrook, because, although there was a difference between the case of Enfield and that of Sparkbrook, a man discharged was discharged wherever he happened to reside, and it was hard upon him in any case. Before the war there were some 2,600 men employed in the Government factory, though he did not admit that was the normal strength; then during the war the numbers went up to 3,600 and he believed higher. After the war they dropped to 2,800 at the beginning of the year; and since then it had been necessary to discharge some 500 more men. This had been very serious, not only to these men and their families, but also to the tradesmen whose business it was to supply them. He was afraid sympathy was not very substantial comfort in this case, but he hoped he might be allowed to express sympathy nevertheless, for he felt this sympathy all the more because these men had behaved so well. He had received deputations from them and from the tradesmen in the district. He had read what had been said at public meetings. No hard words had been used, no improper expressions made use of. They had exercised great self-restraint under great provocation, and had displayed a courage which was altogether commendable. Anything which he could do consistently with his duties, he would do to assist them, but he was not at present in a position to say very definitely what he could do, because the programme of manufacture was not yet complete. They knew how much money was provided for in the Estimates, but there were other sources from which orders might come, and, until he knew what those orders were, it was impossible to lay down what amount of work they would be able to find for these men. For the present they could only remain as they were, and continue to do what they were doing. At present they had all the men engaged on short time, and they proposed to continue that short time, closing the factories on Saturday and Monday, at any rate until the end of May. He hoped the future would then be clear, and that they would know what the programme of manufacture would be. He hoped by that time they would be able to take a definite number on full time. He hoped it would be a large proportion. He could not say that there would be no further reductions, but he could promise that there should be no further large numbers of men discharged at the same time. If it were necessary to make further reductions those reductions should be spread over the largest possible time, so that there should be the least possible hardship.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he was in very great sympathy with what had been said about the conduct of the War Office in this matter. He should like to use this discussion as an illustration of what was going on at the War Office and how completely the House was in the dark as to what they were going to do. He believed every military expert was in favour of rifles being made at the Government factories, but after a decision was taken on the subject by the Secretary of State and the military authorities it was reversed by some outside pressure not unconnected with the Prime Minister. The House was in exactly the same position in regard to the Reserve Forces. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had a scheme last year to destroy the Militia, and to damage the Volunteers to a large extent. That scheme remained with him. He still talked about it as his scheme and said as far as he was concerned such and such a thing would be done. In answer to a Question that day the right hon. Gentleman said that the territorial battalions which were going to be made according to his scheme were not going to be taken in hand till October, because the number of long-service men would not be obtained till that time. That implied that in October he was going to set to work to carry out that scheme. That had never been told them in debate, and it had never been acknowledged when the Government intended to carry out that scheme. He also told them a little more, and said that, so far as the Militia regiments were concerned, no Militia battalion which joined under his new scheme would become a territorial battalion without their consent. It was very easy to get their consent if the Government pressed them. The Secretary for War said he was going to do away with thirty battalions of Militia, and if they did not consent they would be done away with altogether. That was no guarantee that the Militia would be kept in its present state, and they wanted a definite assurance that it would not be tampered with, and without that assurance by the Secretary of State, speaking as a representative of the Government, he was quite sure that Members on both sides of the House would remain unsatisfied.

On his side they had always believed that the Government would give way on the question of the Volunteers, but the last statement was worse than the first, because at first they had some hope that the Prime Minister would overrule the Secretary of State for War as he did in the case of the Small Arms Factory. They expected that that part of the scheme which was likely to destroy the Reserve Forces would be set aside. The scheme, if only partially carried out, meant that they would destroy the Militia, although not perhaps in a day. The present uncertainty was increasing the pressure and weakening the Militia day by day, although the scarcity of men and officers was not so great now as it was immediately after the war. When the Secretary of State said that the Militia was decreasing, and that was a reason for its being done away with, he said it was due to the right hon. Gentleman and the previous Secretaries of State that it had been decreasing. If they were going to do away with the Reserve Forces he should not be afraid if they had something equally good to put in their place, for, after all, whether they were half trained or not, both the Militia and the Volunteers constituted a large force which had always helped us in time of war. If the Volunteers or Militia were taken away the military effectiveness of this Empire would be greatly weakened.

What were the Government going to put in their place? There was a nebulous scheme which looked very pretty on paper. This territorial scheme had passed through the brain of the Secretary for War, and had passed on to the Papers presented to the House. Beyond that it had no real existence at all. Even an Army on paper might in time of a scare be of some use in allaying the panic of the country, but it was a poor thing to rely upon if ever we got into a tight corner. He remembered seeing a picture which represented the ghost of Napoleon reviewing the ghost of the grand army on the Champs de Mars, and he thought this territorial army was as much a ghost as a protector in this case and in fact was a phantom, and it was suggested that we should throw away the whole of our Reserve Forces for a phantom. He wanted a real assurance one way or the other, with no prevarication and no half measures. Was the Prime Minister in favour of this scheme? Was the Army Council in favour of it? Had the Secretary of State's scheme the sanction and support of either one or the other or of the Government? He believed it had not. But it was a thing the House ought to know so that it could form an opinion on the matter and record its vote either for or against the scheme.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had based his speech upon an entire misconception of the statements of the Secretary of State. The right hon. Gentleman had never desired to annihilate the Auxiliary Forces but to put them on a proper basis. The speech of the hon. Gentleman had accentuated a fact which had been before the House for many days, which was that while the House of Commons was splendidly equipped for dealing with almost every question which they might be called upon to consider, it was particularly ill-manned for dealing with questions of either Army or Navy reforms. There were many Members of the House who would be accepted both in and out of the House as authorities upon almost every subject, but there was hardly one who would be accepted outside as an authority on military and naval affairs. That had not always been the case, but at the present time it was very doubtful whether there were four Members of this House whose speeches were ever read outside and regarded as valuable contributions to Army and Navy debates. The Secretary of State for War was one who had a very wide knowledge of Army matters and who was regarded as a great authority upon them, whilst the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, who it was well known was a student of military matters, was another Gentleman whose opinion was listened to with great respect. So far as the other Members of the House were concerned, he did not believe their speeches were ever read by the public outside, whilst within the House those who said the most and spoke oftenest were as a rule those who were least regarded

The Navy in this regard had a great advantage over the Army. It had no Reserve, no Militia, no Volunteers, and no Yeomanry. It would not be unfair, or stretching the point too far, to say that fifty out of every sixty minutes of this debate had been more or less concerned with matters affecting the Auxiliary Forces. He ventured to say that the ordinary taxpayer looked at this matter from quite a different point of view from that which many approached it in the House. One of the things upon which the man in the street laid great stress was that he had learned by experience that to have to improvise an Army greater than the one on the establishment caused a greater expenditure than to carry a larger Army on the establishment, and further, he doubted whether an Army improvised in that way would be a trustworthy Army to meet the attacks of the forces of any civilised Power. The directions in which reductions could be made and in which expenditure must be maintained was not the problem which the ordinary Englishman outside the House was trying to fathom. The man in the street had always been brought up in the belief that the Army must be maintained in sufficient strength to repel any invasion, and that as the Empire increased so the Army must be increased and kept upon a level with the increase of the Empire in order to be in a position to repel any attack which might be made upon us.

Hon. Members opposite were entitled no doubt to ask for information, but when they demanded that the Government should disclose its whole plan, and make known, for instance, at what points on the Indian frontier it proposed to station troops, he thought that to make such information public would be to inflict a great injury on the nation. If a great authority in India suggested to the authorities at home that to ensure the safety of the Indian frontier they must be able to put 120,000 into India within six months in addition to the troops already there, that would practically mean the maintenance of 200,000 British troops in that country, entailing, with the wastage of war and climate, the provision of 50,000 men a year. History showed that great nations, when defeated at one point, were sometimes only too anxious to fight a war of *revanche* in order to regain prestige and reputation. He greatly feared, therefore, that those who held that because Russia had met, and was meeting, with disaster in Manchuria she was likely to abate the anxiety with which she watched our frontier in India, were living in a fool's paradise. If there existed in Russia such a school of thought as he had suggested, there was nothing to which they could have listened with greater delight than those speeches of hon. Members who declared that this country might loll in security, that the warning would come in ample time, and that the difficulties of Russia were such that no attempt need be made to prepare against attack. He could hardly imagine a line of argument so fatal to the interests of this country. The taxpayers who demanded a reduction in expenditure, accepting the view that the country could not be equally invulnerable against both attacks, had to consider which contingency was the more likely to occur—an invasion of this country or an attack upon India—and make preparation accordingly.

With regard to the possibility of invasion, it was too often forgotten that even if there were no Auxiliary Forces, there would still be in this country an enormous number of men who, at some time, had served in the Army, and who, if the Government had sufficient arms and ammunition, could be rapidly improvised into a very formidable force, and one was forced to the conclusion that if reduction had to be made, it should be in the force usable to repel invasion rather than in the force usable to guard against attack in India. He had heard nothing from the Secretary of State to lead him to believe that the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to go very far in the direction of the reduction of the Auxiliary Forces. The right hon. Gentleman's desire was to lop off that which was inefficient and, to some extent, redundant, and to make the remainder more efficient. That object could be carried out simultaneously with the policy of providing efficient safeguards for the frontier of India. There was nobody in the House but had a high regard and intense sympathy for the Auxiliary Forces, and would like to retain and improve them all, both for the direct purpose of fighting and for the indirect advantages which accrued to the population in general. But if the problem had to be faced, it being impossible to effect the reduction demanded and at the same time maintain both branches of the service, was it any wonder that the nation should choose the contraction — not the extinction—of the Auxiliary Forces and the expansion of the Regulars, rather than the contraction of the Regular Army and the expansion of the Auxiliary Forces. If that line of reasoning was at all sound, the House was forced in the direction of military policy outlined by the Secretary of State for War.

Another matter in which he was deeply interested was the question of the shortage of officers both in the Army and in the Auxiliary Forces. That shortage ought not to exist. There was a shortage, so to speak, of the manufactured article, but almost a superabundance of the raw material which could be turned into the manufacturered article at very short notice. How was that condition of affairs to be remedied? He fully agreed that the high standard of education, professional and otherwise, should be maintained for those officers who intended to make the Army their life career, but it did not at all follow that the War Office should refuse that other type of young fellow, of which there were so many ready to serve —men who were prepared to give eight or ten of the best years of their life to the Army. The services of such men were not to be secured by making the Army unattractive, and it undoubtedly was made unattractive if for the first years of the young officer's life he was hunted from one course of instruction to another and not given time for any legitimate amusement or recreation. Unless they could give extra inducements in the way of pay and make the early stages of the soldier's life more attractive they would find that this shortage would continue. They had in the present Secretary of State for War a man who thoroughly sympathised with the instincts of British officers, and he desired the officers to be really good trustworthy leaders of men. His suggestion was that while the right hon. Gentleman should take care to attract the higher type of men into the Army he should not close the door upon that other very valuable man who would give eight or ten years of the best part of his life to the service, and who could serve his country admirably. The right hon. Gentleman would get out of his difficulty in that way.

*Mr. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.) said that after the warning given by the hon. Member for Newport he felt considerable diffidence in rising at all. He would remind the hon. Member that he omitted to mention the Secretary of State for India, who was a distinguished military authority. A short time ago the hon. Member appealed to them to treat this matter more or less in the same way as they treated naval questions with an absence of Party spirit. If he applied that remark to the speeches of hon. Members opposite they might certainly have taken his advice to heart, for they had treated the matter without any ties of Party discipline, and he hoped the Secretary of State for War was pleased with the result. If the hon. Member alluded to voting, that appeal came very badly from the opposite side, for it was hon. Members on the Opposition side who ought to appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite, who had criticised the scheme of the Government but who would not support their opinions in the lobby with their votes. Whilst it might be true that an invasion was absolutely impossible supported from a base, he was not at all satisfied that something in the nature of a formidable raid was impossible. A formidable force might raid this country, and when they considered the extraordinarily complicated organisation of life in this country and how they depended upon railways and telegraphs, it was very difficult to foretell what damage a determined raid might not do before they were able to deal with it. He was certain that this sudden conversion to the blue-water school might be attended with a certain amount of danger. The hon. Member for Newport had alluded to the possible necessity of sending out 120,000 troops to reinforce the garrison of India in the event of trouble on the North-West Frontier. Upon this same point the Secretary of State for War spoke about the necessity that might arise of sending out the same number of men to India as we were obliged to send to South Africa during the last war.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER dissented.

*Mr. LYELL said that was what the right hon. Gentleman said. If they looked at the map they would see what an immense frontier they had to defend on the North-West of India. Most of them knew that the geographical situation there presented an almost insurmountable barrier to any invasion except at one or two small points. The hon. Member might remember what happened in the Tirah campaign. The military authorities made preparations for a much bigger affair, and prepared for contingencies which were not realised by providing 40,000 men. They got this army into the Tirah Valley, and then they found that they had twice or three times the force which they could employ. That was what would take place under the policy enunciated by the Secretary of State for War of sending out to India a force equal to that which was sent out to South Africa.

The Secretary for War had told them that the cardinal point of his reform was a question of reduction, and a very considerable reduction, in money. What had happened? This reduction now remained in abeyance. The whole of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme was in abeyance, and what was more, the alternative scheme was also in abeyance, and that was the right hon. Gentleman's resignation. If they were to have any considerable reduction it must be in the number of men. If they were not going to sweep away *cadres* they must reduce the strength of their battalions very considerably indeed. Having reduced the battalions they should see how much they were capable of expansion in time of urgent necessity. They had the Reserves to fall back upon; and 500 men with 400 Reserves would strengthen a battalion and they might add about 300 picked Volunteers. They would then raise it to a very high war strength, and in a very short time they would have an extremely efficient fighting battalion. He did not maintain that it was possible to send Volunteer *cadres* to face foreign troops, but he thought it was possible to largely fill up Regular troops in moments of emergency from the Volunteers. The right hon. Gentleman was discouraging the Volunteers, but he said that he was reducing them because they were inefficient. It was impossible to carry out the reduction he had suggested without sweeping away not only the inefficient but some of the efficient men. If he wanted to improve their efficiency why did he not raise the physical standard. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that if he kept this decrease hanging over the heads of the Volunteers he would discourage that spirit of self-sacrifice which had been shown by thousands of men in the past, who showed their patriotism by joining the Volunteers. It was impossible to make a reduction in the number of the Volunteers without reducing their efficiency. The more men we were able to maintain the more efficient men there would be when the pinch came. He protested most strongly against the proposal to reduce the Volunteers.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the hon. and gallant Member for Shropshire had declared there were not four Members of the House who knew anything adequate of military matters. There were, therefore, three. Two he had named—the Secretary of State for War, and the Member for the Forest of Dean. The third, with his usual modesty, he had refrained from naming, but he had plainly indicated him as a level-headed man—from Shropshire. The difficulty felt in the debate was to extract from the Secretary of State for War what he meant to do and what he was allowed to do. At present there were four conceptions of the Army—those of the Army Council, the Committee of Defence, the Cabinet, and the Secretary of State for War. No two of these conceptions agreed, and the House wanted to know, as practical men, which was the conception which would prevail, or whether there was to be a kind of salad made of all of them, and a compromise as the result. The House wanted to know from somebody what the British Army was going to be. There were two kinds of invasions which had been talked about. The hon. and gallant Member for Shropshire had dwelt lovingly on the Russian invasion of India. That had been the bogey of a hundred years; but India had never yet been invaded. From the days of Peter the Great every man who presumed to be a British statesman, a strategist, or a military critic, had always taught his countrymen to beware of the invasion of India. His own belief was that the danger had been over-rated, and the difficulties under-rated, and that the danger was less and the difficulties greater now than ever. It was true that there were Russian railways to the frontier of India. But there had also been Russian railways to the frontier of Manchuria, on the frontier, and across Manchuria itself. But railways were nothing compared to ships. As we held the sea for India, so the Japanese held the sea for Manchuria, and by that they had rolled back the invasion. The cause of Russian failure and of Japanese success in Manchuria was the sea power of Japan; and it seemed to him that, instead of the invasion of India becoming more easy for Russia, it had become infinitely more difficult. Surely the moment after a most exhausting war was not the one Russia would choose for such another desperate enterprise as the invasion of India. His belief was that, in spite of the railways made towards the frontier of India, the natural difficulties of Afghanistan, if we used them as we should do, by alliance with the Afghans, and not by invasions of their country, added to our own natural advantages of access to India by sea, would be sufficient to protect India from serious invasion by Russia for many long years to come.

It had also been suggested that there might be an invasion of these islands. Such an invasion had long been suggested and even seriously attempted, and in every instance the attempt had been defeated, not by soldiers, but always by sailors. During the whole continuance of the Napoleonic Wars we were constantly in danger of invasion, but it never occurred to any man that we should protect the country from invasion by the Regular Army. It was by our ships alone that it was done. He wished to say a word as to the places where the ships should be. There had been a conflict of opinion in early days between Lord St. Vincent and Lord Howe as to the best means of defending these shores. Lord Howe desired to have the Fleet always near our shores, while Lord St. Vincent contended that our warships should be off the enemy's ports, in order to keep in constant touch with the enemy's ships. When a ship left a port it was lost sight of, so that the only way to watch an enemy's vessels was to have our Fleet watching off the enemy's ports. They must watch the rat at the hole and deal with it when it came out. It was not the Channel Fleet, therefore, but the vessels off Brest and Toulon, during the Napoleonic Wars, that preserved this country from invasion, and the principle was still true, though in these modern days the point of observation might have been shifted to the Elbe or the entrance to the Baltic. During the Napoleonic Wars our Fleet had another sphere of action, to capture the enemy's trade under whatever flag it was found, and our abandonment of that power was regarded by the late Lord Salisbury as most unwise. But if our Fleets were eluded and an invading army marching on London, would that finish everything? Would the country remain quiet? Would there be no Highlanders coming down from the North, no men of Birmingham marching to succour the capital? And even if the Government capitulated, surrendered, and handed over the whole country to the enemy, he could conceive the subsequent arrival of an admiral from the Pacific or Atlantic who would repudiate the Government and the capitulation together, and save the country by simply cutting the enemy's communications.

In regard to the question of the country being starved out, the right hon. Gentleman, in his opinion, was wrong. We might have no Fleet at all and still this country could not be starved. So large and so numerous were the avenues of sea access to this country that it was impossible to bring that about and they must remain open. To starve us they would have to close the seas from the Naze of Norway, round by the West of Ireland to Ushant, and all the fleets in the world could not do it. Since, therefore, the avenues of arrival could not be closed, if the supplies of this country were to be stopped it would have to be at the ports from which they issued. These ports were infinite in number, and at present it would be impossible to do that unless we had in force some such arrangement as the Sugar Convention which might prohibit us from getting corn from certain countries. That would facilitate the task of the enemy, would prevent us from getting corn from certain ports, would diminish to a few, perhaps to very few, the ports of issue, and would, perhaps, render possible the closure of those few. So long, however, as this country stood to the principle of free trade and relied for supplies upon the entire world, so long as there were an infinity of ports from which corn could be sent, so long would it be impossible to starve this country. In his opinion the Fleet was the implement to protect us from invasion, and the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in placing his chief reliance upon it. But that there should be also something else was true, and what that something should be was indicated by our position. If he were a

German or a Frenchman he should never have a good word for a Volunteer or a Militiaman, but it was because we were surrounded by the sea and because we only wanted a little breathing time for the aid which must come from the provinces and from Fleets, that of all countries in the world this country might be defended by Volunteers and Militiamen. The Militia was the old traditional and constitutional force of the country, and the Volunteers had had their origin in a public spirit which had not been shown in any other country in the world. In his belief those forces were sufficient, with a very small stiffening force of Regulars, to meet anything in the shape of an invasion which might be attempted upon this country. He thought any War Minister ought to be thankful that patriotism, courage, and spirit should induce men to make soldiering a hobby and to give their money and their time to such an end, their labour and their efforts being sweetened and made delightful because they were put forth in the public service. That was, he thought, the sort of element upon which we could safely rely in time of danger, and that was an element which he was sorry to see a disposition on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to discourage. It was an element, however, which he should do his best to foster because it was one which was invaluable to the country.

Captain BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal) said that hon. Members had spoken as if it were the intention of his right hon. friend the Secretary for War to strike a severe blow at our Volunteer force, if not to do away with it altogether. He did not understand, however, that the right hon. Gentleman was in any way dealing a destructive blow at our Volunteer and Reserve Forces. They had heard a great deal about the possibility of invasion on a large scale and on a small scale, but these were matters which could not be proved and of which no adequate proof could be given to the House. It was quite clear, however, that Auxiliary Forces to the number of 200,000 would be sufficient to satisfy our requirements in any possible circumstances under

which England could be invaded by a large force, and would also satisfy those who thought that it could be invaded by a small force. What his right hon. friend contemplated was not to do away with the Volunteers in any way or even to deal a severe blow at them. If he took such a course nothing could be more damaging to the patriotic spirit of the people of this country. He hoped it would go forth to the country as the result of this debate that no serious alteration in our Volunteer system was intended by the right hon. Gentleman or the Government, or anybody else. So far as he understood it the right hon. Gentleman's proposal appeared to be a reasonable and sensible one. The Volunteer force consisted of some 250,000 men, and it was perfectly well known that some economies should be brought about. The proposal was that the number of Volunteers should be reduced to some 200,000, and that the saving thus effected should be devoted to making the remainder more efficient. It was quite clear that upon the whole now the Volunteers were not properly equipped with transport and various other equipments which would enable them to move if this invasion either on a big or a small scale took place. Moreover 200,000 men were sufficient, he thought, to satisfy both those who thought that a large invasion was possible and those who thought that only a small one was feasible. If there was any intention of abolishing the Volunteers or reducing their numbers he should be the first to oppose it, and if there was any idea of striking a serious blow at them he thought the country would resent it. If the numbers were reduced, however, it would do no harm if the result was to make those who were left more efficient. The Volunteer force had for years past said, "Give us more reality, make us more like real soldiers," and he thought they would prefer to be dealt with as Regular troops and would not mind the reduction.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

CHELSEA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BILL [By Order].

EPPING GAS BILL [By Order].

Read the third time, and passed.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [By Order] (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).

Read the third time, and passed.

HIGHAM AND HUNDRED OF HOO WATER BILL [By Order].

LOUGHBOROUGH CORPORATION BILL [By Order].

NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [By Order].

WEYBRIDGE AND WALTON-UPON-THAMES ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL [By Order].

Read the third time, and passed.

GREAT NORTHERN (IRELAND) AND MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL [By Order].

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN (Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) said the Chairman of Ways and Means, who was unable to be present himself owing to illness, had requested him to move this Motion. He had also asked him to explain that his right hon. friend only put down the Motion because he understood that the Standing Orders Committee agreed to it, but if they did not agree to it he was not to force it through. Both the promoters and the opponents to the Bill were of opinion that if it were referred back to the Committee it would save discussion in the House, and his right hon. friend the Chairman of Committees understood that the Committee on Standing Orders agreed to have it referred back to them because the petition not being put in to time was due to an error. In former days petitions against a Bill had to be put in within ten days after the First Reading, but it was decided to alter the Standing Order so that now all petitions must be put in by February 12th. It appeared that the Parliamentary agents had obtained a copy of the old Standing Orders, and it was due to that that the error had occurred. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Resolution of the Select Committee on Standing Orders of 14th March in the case of the Petition of the Portadown Urban District Council praying to be heard against the said Bill be referred back to the Select Committee on Standing Orders with a view to consider whether, under the circumstances of the case, Standing Order 128 should be dispensed with in respect of the said Petition."—(*The Deputy-Chairman.*)

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said this was an exceptional Motion. It did not instruct the Committee on Standing Orders to do anything but to re-consider a decision they had already arrived at. He thought the language of the right hon. Gentleman was exaggerated. So far as he knew, the Committee on Standing Orders had expressed no wish to have this referred back to them. He objected to the Motion on the previous Friday, because it was made on a Friday—that was the extent of his objection. He did not feel warranted in opposing it now that the Chairman of Ways and Means had, on his own responsibility and after due consideration, put the Motion on the Paper, but he wished strongly to emphasise its exceptional nature.

Mr. HALSEY (Hertfordshire, Watford) said the right hon. Gentleman the Deputy-Chairman was a little misinformed when he said he understood the Standing Orders Committee wished this back; that was too strong a term. It was a most unusual course for the House to refer back to the Committee a matter upon which they had come to a decision and reported. But he did not intend to offer any opposition to the Motion.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said so far as he knew there had not been any consultation with the Committee on Standing Orders as to the propriety of this proposal. The Standing Orders Committee had nothing to do with the merits of the Bill. They had merely to say whether the Standing Order should be dispensed with. This was a somewhat important matter for the House of Commons. The question was whether they were going to remit back to the Standing Orders Committee a question which they had already determined for their reconsideration. It was an unusual Motion, but not an unprecedented one. In former years cases had been remitted to the Standing Orders Committee, but in all the precedents for a Motion of this kind the Chairman of Committees had been able to say there were certain new facts which had not come to the knowledge of the Standing Orders Committee. As a member of the Committee he sincerely hoped the House would not assent to this Motion unless some really fresh facts were going to be adduced.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 104; Noes, 93. (Division List No. 104.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Fred'k George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bull, William James
Caldwell, James
Campbell, JHM (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (T'r Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'ss B'ghs)
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Freder'k
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'rH'ml'ts
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq. of (Lond'nd'ry
Heath, Sir James (Staff'ds. N.W
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (Kent, Favers'm
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Law Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinb'r'h, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh're
Milvain, Thomas
Moore, William
Morrison, James Archibald
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Rt. HnJ. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E. (T'n't'n
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Charles Craig and Mr. Lonsdale.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gilhooly, James
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr T'vil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John

Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Ac'r'gton
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Killop W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Roche, John
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Fuller and Mr. J. H. Whitley.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL [By Order].

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL [By Order].

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL [By Order].

Read a second time and committed.

SUPPLY [4th Allotted Day] [5th April] REPORT.

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [6th April] to Resolution, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,101,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out '£10,101,000,' and insert '£10,100,900.'"—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question again proposed, "That '£10,101,000' stand part of the said Resolution."

CAPTAIN BAGOT (continuing his remarks) said it was impossible to increase the numbers of the forces, to improve their efficiency, and at the same time to reduce expenditure. It had been assumed that a large reduction of the Volunteers was contemplated. No one would be more opposed to such a proposal than he, but that was not the intention of the Secretary of State. The right hon. Gentleman desired to increase the efficiency of the force, which perhaps involved some numerical reduction, and he believed that the proposal would meet with general approval.

Comparatively little had been said about the Regular Army, which, after all, was the nucleus of our military forces, and therefore the most important. Every Secretary of State for War was expected to make bricks without straw; he had to provide a Regular Army, and constantly had the military forces of the Continent held up before him, but he was told at the same time that he must not incur any great expenditure. There was only one other country with which a comparison could really be made if it was desired to see whether we were getting fair value for our money, and that was the United States. It was no good talking about what was done by France, Russia, or Japan, where men were taken compulsorily and paid sufficient just to keep body and soul together. In the United States, where they had a voluntary Army, the cost per soldier was three times the amount paid in this country. If the country was not prepared to increase the pay of the soldier so as to compete more fairly with the unskilled labour market, the Army would have to be popularised by the removal of restrictions on the liberty of the soldier when off duty. Taken all round, the soldier was much better off than he used to be, but things must be looked at as they were, and there was undoubtedly a feeling, possibly inherited from past times, that the position of a soldier was not quite so good as that of an ordinary working man. That being so, he was prepared to advocate views which he knew were not popular, especially with the older generation of military officers. Recruits would be more quickly obtained if there was a general and practical recognition of the fact that in this country the general tendency amongst working men for the last thirty or forty years had been towards increased freedom. No doubt certain restrictions in the case of the soldier had been relaxed. He remembered when soldiers were not allowed to play cricket or football, or to smoke in the public streets, or, under any circumstances, to wear plain clothes. These were small matters, but they were of considerable importance to the soldier. Old-fashioned officers, especially those who favoured the German school, were inclined to think that the end of the world would come, or some terrible military catastrophe happen, if the British soldier was placed much more on the footing of the free working man of this country. Personally, however, he could see no reason why, for instance, a soldier should not be allowed to have a suit of plain clothes in the barrack-room to wear under certain restrictions. There was also the question of hours, full-grown men being expected to be in bed and lights out by 10.30. Considerable extensions of freedom might be given in regard to many of these comparatively trifling matters, and he believed the result would be greatly to popularise the Army.

Another matter to which he desired to refer was the Intelligence Department. The South African War taught us that our Intelligence Department was much behindhand, and the country was promised that considerable increases should be made. In Germany the number of officers in the Intelligence Department was about 200, but in this country was only from twenty to forty. There had doubtless been some alterations made, but from an examination of the Estimates he was unable to ascertain where the increases had taken place, and many Members would be glad of an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that a genuine increase had been made. In time of peace an efficient Intelligence Department doubtless appeared to be rather expensive, but in time of war there could be no greater economy.

With regard to the Auxiliary Forces, there was considerable difficulty under present arrangements in finding out who would be prepared to go out in time of emergency to fill up the ranks either in the infantry or in the cavalry of the Regular Army. The question was discussed on a previous occasion, and the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor promised a scheme under which Yeomary privates who could ride and shoot well should be registered and given a bounty of £5 a year, and then, on emergency, be drafted at once into the cavalry or mounted infantry abroad. The proposal was not received with favour by Yeomanry officers in the House, but from conversations he had had with Yeomanry officers and men outside he believed it would be a good scheme, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider the matter with a view to its adoption.

MAJOR SEELY wished to bring the House back to the purpose with which this reduction was moved, viz., definitely to challenge the scheme of the Secretary of State. Much had been said as to the difficulty of understanding what was really intended. He thought, however, most Members understood what the right hon. Gentleman meant, but it appeared that the right hon. Gentleman meant one thing and the House of Commons another. If that were so, it was highly undesirable that the House should be led into adopting a scheme which the majority believed would have disastrous effects on the Militia, Volunteers, and Yeomanry. The opponents of the scheme challenged the right hon. Gentleman's proposal to have a short-service Army to stay home in time of peace and to go abroad in time of national emergency. He would not identify himself with many of the hard things which had been said about the Secretary of State. The right hon. Gentleman had undoubtedly discouraged the Volunteers and the Militia, but not intentionally. Many Members sympathised with much that he recommended, but they wholly dissented from his proposal with regard to a short-service Army. Their first reason was that, whether intentionally or not, it would undoubtedly tend to abolish the Militia. If they formed a home-service Army what would be the use of the Militia? Their purpose would be practically gone. Every man who was asked to join the Militia under the new order of things, would reply, "What useful purpose can we serve, because the short-service Army supplies all that is wanted." To form a home-service Army would be unfortunate, because it would mean the abolition of the Militia. Not only would it undoubtedly tend to make the Militia die away, but it would also have a disastrous effect on the Volunteers. The object of the Volunteers was to keep alive a spirit of patriotism and to provide a school of arms. These who belonged to the more rational school believed that, after all, although invasion was unlikely, it was still possible. New inventions might entirely modify naval strategy. Therefore, the country should take from every man what he could give in the way of military service, and in the Volunteers the country had the means of obtaining those services.

The Secretary for War told the House he had the highest opinion of the Volunteers. All he could say was that the Volunteers did not think so. In the course of the debate it had been pointed out that the value of the Volunteers was not only for home defence, but the possibility that they would be able to help the country in the case of a great war. The right hon. Gentleman said the idea that they could be relied upon to reinforce the Regular Army was a pure delusion, and he stated that when they were called upon during what was known as "The Black Week," only 10,000 were found ready to go to South Africa. That was a very unfair imputation to place upon the Volunteers. The right hon. Gentleman wished the House to believe that only 10,000 out of 200,000 Volunteers could be found ready to go to the war. They were all aware that when the officers made the call for men, they readily obtained some 60 or 70 per cent. of their regiments for active service. The home-service Army was designed to provide a safeguard for the country which it was supposed the Volunteers could not give. Further, the formation of a home-service Army would be a bad thing from the point of view of policy, because it would make small wars more easy and great wars more disastrous. This new system would place large forces at the disposal of the Minister for War and the Government, and this would undoubtedly encourage them to engage in war. What was more, they would not have a strong body of public opinion to warn them as to the result, because the people would have come more and more to look upon the home-service Army as the only fighting force with which they needed to concern themselves. The result would be that the people would be merely onlookers, and would not feel any responsibility themselves; and consequently they would not exert that restraining influence upon the Government which a wiser system would secure.

Another point was, would this force really provide what they wanted? He stated most emphatically that it would not. It would provide a portion, but it could not possibly provide anything more than a tithe of what was wanted for a really great and desperate struggle. When such a struggle would come none of them could say, but the First Lord of the Admiralty had stated that the defence of the Indian frontier was the principal military problem for this country, and he pointed out that it was far easier for a certain Power to place troops on that frontier than in the part of the world where she was now fighting. The Secretary for War said that it was not ships alone that had overthrown Russia, but the Japanese army as well. But what army did Japan require to face a smaller force than it was held that this country might have to face on the Indian frontier? Japan had mobilised 830,000 men to achieve what she had achieved. They all hoped that such a terrible ordeal would never come to this country, but nevertheless it was just as well to look facts squarely in the face. According to Lord Selborne, what they wanted for this great struggle was 800,000 men. He did not say that Lord Selborne was right, but his Lordship belonged to the same school as the Secretary of State for War. His point was that a home-service Army would never provide that number. In November, 1903, the Prime Minister said that, in a really great struggle, they could not depend upon the Regular Army alone, and they could only rely upon a patriotic people trained to arms, full of that self-sacrifice which alone could ensure victory. They condemned the home-service Army on four grounds. In the first place it would ruin the Militia; secondly, it would damage the Volunteers; thirdly, it would lessen the sense of responsibility for the defence of this country which rested upon the people; and fourthly, it would not provide them with the thing they needed. Nothing would provide them with that except the self-sacrifice of the people as a whole. For those reasons they condemned the home-service Army. He did not say they all condemned it, but they all looked upon it as a dangerous experiment which ought not to be tried until the House had expressed its opinion upon it. From what they had heard in the debate they knew that many hon. Members opposite viewed this proposal with much alarm. They had been told that the Committee of Defence was not unanimous upon it. Therefore, it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman would tell the House whether there was any truth in the rumour that the formation of a home-service Army did not command the assent of the Army Council or of the Committee of Defence.

The Secretary for War would, no doubt, ask what was to be put in place of the home-service Army. He thought means might be found by which an agreement might possibly be reached. If it were ascertained that the Militia would be prepared as a body to accept liability for foreign service, it would then, no doubt, be wise to level up that force, and possibly to give its members a longer period of training.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: How long?

MAJOR SEELY said that six months had been suggested. This period had been suggested by Militia officers as feasible, and if the recruits could sleep out of barracks it would be an advantage, because they wished as few as possible of them to be maintained in barracks. There were also other suggestions for making the Militia more serviceable for the purpose the right hon. Gentleman had in view. What hon. Members on that side of the House said was that they would not have the home-service Army until they had tried another plan. If it were essential to have such a force, improvement of the Militia afforded the better means of attaining that end. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to say whether he was determined to go through with the home-service Army scheme, whether he had the support of the Army Council in the proposal to proceed with the enlistment of a short-service Army to stay at home except in time of war, whether the Committee of Defence were unanimous and proposed to support him in forming a home-service Army, and whether the Committee of Defence and the Army Council were prepared to go through with the necessary concomitants of the formation of this short-service Army. He believed that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would empty the Exchequer, and sap the patriotism of the people.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said the Secretary for War would clear up a great deal of the mystery which hung around the question of the Militia if he would tell them exactly what would be the position of the Militia if his scheme were carried into effect and what his scheme exactly was. In the Hampshire regiment there were three battalions; one was at Malta, one in England, the third was the Militia battalion, and there was a depot at Winchester. When the present scheme was carried into operation what would happen? Where would the first battalion be? Where would the second battalion be, and where would the Militia be? The hon. Member for Tunbridge had very wisely said what his remedies were for the evils which existed at the present time, and named two which he believed were undoubted and unanswerable. The first was the position of the adjutant of the depot. There was no doubt that the adjutant of the depot was in the position of trying to serve two masters. During eleven months of the year he knew that the eyes of the colonel of the regiment were upon him, and loyal as he might be to the Militia battalion and anxious as he might be to promote its interests, he could not properly at the same time satisfy the requirements made upon him by the colonel of his regiment in respect of the Line battalions. The second point made by his hon. friend was that in the Militia they had a school of arms. In this respect his experience showed that although the Militiaman was a rough article when he went up for drill, at the end of a month he was quite a different man, and at the end of three months he would be on the high way to be fit for the front line of battle. In the case of national emergency it had been proved that they would go abroad, and he had no doubt that if the promised Bill was proceeded with it would not be unpopular, not only amongst the officers who might be called upon, but amongst the men also. Militiamen did make great sacrifice in the services they gave. He did not think that if the request to be made liable for foreign service was put before them the Militia would hesitate in any way about accepting that responsibility, and they would willingly agree to give their services abroad.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) asked the Secretary of State for War to say whether, in reducing the British garrison in Egypt and the Soudan from 3,000 to 1,000, proper consideration had been given to the opinions of military men and civilians who knew the country. We had in Egypt and the Soudan enormous British interests, and surely a force of 3,000 men was small indeed to uphold those interests in a region extending to 1,250,000 square miles. He understood that the cavalry were to be altogether withdrawn, and that there was to be a large reduction in the artillery. He recently had an opportunity of discussing this matter with military men and civilians in Egypt and the Soudan, who were from personal knowledge in a better position than the Secretary of State for War to form a sound judgment, and they regarded the recall of a portion of the British forces as a possible cause of peril in the future of a very serious character. Egypt was the half-way house to India, and it might be of importance in time of emergency to have an even larger proportion of the British Army there. When it was remembered that in the last ten years we had increased the expenditure on the Army by £10,000,000, the House had a right to know whether we had proportionately increased our ability to defend our world-wide Empire. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had stated that what we needed was not a larger Army, but a more perfectly organised and efficient Army, and he also stated that no one outside of the War Office believed we were getting anything like value for our money. The hon. Member believed that was the general opinion of the country. This enormous increase in expenditure had brought no corresponding increase in the efficiency of the forces. We did not need that the Regular Army should be a dual Army. Why should we have departed from the Cardwell scheme of seven years with the colours and five years in the Reserve? That scheme answered the purpose well. Why should we not be free from the absolute chaos which a dual Army would bring about?

He was sure the whole nation was astonished at the proposal put forward to reduce the Volunteer force. Surely the needs of the Empire would dictate that instead of being reduced, the Volunteer force should be doubled, and, by proper treatment, made more popular. He considered that it was simply a disgrace that officers in that force should have to pay out of their own pockets a large proportion of the expenses for keeping the force going. If the Volunteers were to receive proper encouragement their numbers might be doubled. What a splendid recruiting ground that would form for the Regular Army! The nation had become absolutely sick of the endless schemes put forward for Army reorganisation without any result in efficiency. Last year the Secretary of State for War said, practically, that if his proposals were not accepted he would no longer remain in that office, and this session he came to the House and propounded a very much varied scheme which had made confusion worse confounded. No man knew what the scheme of Army reform and reorganisation was. There had been so much "I, I, I," in the right hon. Gentleman's speeches, and so little in regard to what the proposals of the Government were, that really hon. Members did not know where they were. It was no use whatever for the right hon. Gentleman to repeat what he himself desired; what they wanted to know was what the proposals of the Government were.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud) asked whether the words "outlying and inefficient" in the Memorandum were to be considered as being interchangeable. He admitted that there were many inefficient companies, but at the same time he thought that many of the outlying companies were ideal companies.

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said he knew that the hon. Member for the Barnsley Division was a great authority on the Chinese army, and on all matters pertaining to that great people. The hon. Gentleman had now extended his travels to Egypt, and he was seriously disturbed as to the weakening of the garrison there. It was interesting to know that the hon. Gentleman was a strong supporter of the Cardwell system. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had given a pronouncement in which he avowed himself a determined follower of the Cardwell system, which was instituted when the right hon. Gentleman was a young man in the House of Commons. He clung to it with all the affection of youth and enthusiasm. The junior Member for Oldham had become a convert to it. The hon. Member for East Bristol had been in his day a great and ardent Army reformer, but his days of dash and defiance seemed to have passed, and he was now a humble follower of the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I expressed my adherence a year ago to the Cardwell system when, I think, I was the only private Member who did so.

*MR PEEL said it seemed that the hon. Member had been a pioneer among private Members in leading them back to the Cardwell fold. The hon. Member for the Barnsley Division and the junior Member for Oldham had expressed themselves as supporters of the formula of seven and five years as against the nine and three years advocated by the Secretary for War. But it was not difficult to recognise that seven and five was the same as eight and four, and the majority of people did not see any great difference of principle between eight and four and nine and three. Indeed, any intelligent foreigner after listening to these debates would come to the conclusion that this country had no need of any Army at all. The question of invasion had been scouted. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench strongly repudiated the suggestion that he advocated five men in a dinghy. He was not himself a convinced adherent of the dinghy policy. As to the North-West frontier of India, that danger had been entirely disposed of by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, although the hon. Member for Stepney sneered at the doctrines prevailing in military circles in India that there was anything to fear in that quarter. Really, therefore, they were led almost to the conclusion that no Army was wanted at all. The striking force which they had been told was necessary for the purpose of small wars was really only necessary during the existence of a Unionist Government because it was established on almost irrefragable evidence that the existence of a Unionist Government in power was coincident with the existence of small wars, and that with the disappearance of the Unionist Government the small wars almost instantly disappeared. He largely agreed with the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen who said that it was really impossible to discuss questions in regard to the Militia and Volunteers unless they had previously discussed the possibility of the invasion of this country and the question of the vulnerability of the Indian frontier. It would have been better to have had a debate on the great questions of policy first, and after that criticism upon details would have been more fruitful.

He desired to deal with the question of the Militia, and he was inclined to think the Secretary for War was not departing from the aim he avowed last year; he was only altering his method. The

Militia was not to be abolished; it was to be transformed. First the force was to be made liable to be sent for service abroad, and it followed that they must have the training that would fit them to meet a foreign army, and, according to the right hon. Gentleman, two years training was the least they should receive. It was very disturbing to officers and men in the Militia to be kept in the dark concerning the changes that were to take place in the force until the right hon. Gentleman had obtained a sufficient number of men on the nine years service to make up the Indian drafts. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman might say that it was difficult to prophesy concerning the future, but he should bring forward some plan. He did not think it would be possible to conduct an ordinary private business on the principles which seemed to animate the Secretary for War in conducting the business of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman said that he was succeeding in getting men for his long-service Army, but he admitted that he was not getting men for the short-service Army. When there were these two competing systems they had got to consider how the ordinary soldier looked upon them. The ordinary soldier might draw an invidious distinction between the foreign-service Army and the home-service Army. But the whole of the system of a long-service Army and a short-service Army depended on the relation that was to be established between the battalions at home and the battalions abroad. Without going into too great details, the right hon. Gentleman might give some explanation as to what these relations were to be.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: May I say a word in reply to the hon. Member for Barnsley? I assure him that if I smiled it was not a cynical smile, but an amused smile, because I regret that though his residence in Egypt has introduced him to distinguished acquaintances they were not able to give him better information. He referred to the reduction of the garrison of Egypt, and he appeared to regard that as one of the many crimes of the War Office. The hon. Member was only 300 per cent. wrong in his figures. The garrison of Egypt is not 1,000, but something over 3,000. The reduction was not made by uninformed untravelled persons alone. It was made at the express request, and on the urgent representations, of Lord Cromer himself.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: The essence of my statement was that there had been a substantial reduction of the garrison of Egypt, and if I made a mistake in the exact figure that does not affect the question of a large reduction having been made.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I need not press the matter any further.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: What reduction has been made?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The reduction has been a battalion of infantry, a battery of artillery, and a regiment of cavalry. Let me come to the main subjects of this debate, the last, I suppose, of the rather prolonged series we have had on this subject. I wish just to ask the House to go back to the beginning of the situation. I want them, if they can, to get rid of the idea that I, in this matter, have been acting as a sort of will-o'-the-wisp, trying to carry out my own particular views without any relation to the facts. What are the facts?

When I came into office two documents confronted me, or rather one document. The other was presented to me shortly afterwards. One was the Report of the War Commission. The second was the Report of the Auxiliary Forces Commission. Those two documents were crammed full of lessons, lessons which were urged upon the War Department, upon this House, and upon the country. We were told that we should be criminal if we neglected to pay attention to those lessons and to follow the guidance which those lessons gave us. What were they? Let me give one or two examples. We were told by the War Commission that there had been a very serious state of things at the time of the outbreak of the South African War—that the Reserves were inadequate for carrying out that war, that the units were inadequate for prosecuting that war, and that we had to relieve the country from the recurrence of a similar state of things in the future. Was it or was it not my duty to try and fall in with those recommendations and give effect to them? That has been the principal object of our concern.

We are endeavouring to do two things—to provide an adequate number of units in time of war and to provide an adequate Reserve. We have heard over and over again that a recurrence to the seven and five years system would enable us to meet the requirements of the War Commission's Report—that it would give us the Reserve we require in time of war. I say, without hesitation, that is a fallacy. It is not so; it cannot be so; and if it were true, which it is not, it would become absolutely ludicrous when you couple with that proposition the other proposition to reduce the number of Regular battalions. I challenge contradiction when I say that the seven and five years system did not give us, and will not give us in the future, the Reserves we require or the reinforcements for the Army in time of war. I do not challenge contradiction further, because the thing is so obvious, that if that be so the reduction of battalions would still further reduce that Reserve.

What was the conclusion we drew from that state of things? We came to the conclusion that you must change the organisation of the Regular Army in such a way that you will have a larger number of *cadres*, a larger number of officers, and a larger Reserve. Some hon. Members have spoken of the Reserve as being destroyed, of their being an insufficient and inefficient Reserve. Let us examine that proposition. The Reserve which will be formed will be a double Reserve. That is no new thing. There are Rserves formed from two classes of men in the Army now, and there always have been. There are in every other army; there are in the Navy. It is said that the Reserve will be insufficient. That is an entire mistake. It will be far in excess of any Reserve we have ever had. It is said it will be inefficient. The men who furnish it will have had some training—training that is given to every soldier in every army in every country except our own. There are one or two exceptions, but I need not dwell upon them. They will have had more than that. We have been now for the last four years passing men into the Reserve with under three years training. They will have nine years in the Reserve without any training at all. Men who are passed from the short-service battalion will be trained during their Reserve period; training which I believe to be absolutely essential for the proper utilisation of any Reserve at all. And why are we to be told that these Reserve men are inefficient for the purposes of war? Just look at the argument. We are told that we are creating a second class, an inferior class, of soldiers. It is admitted that we cannot get a sufficient Reserve for the Army in time of war out of a long-service Army; and we have been told, over and over again, that we are to supplement that deficient Reserve by taking men from the Auxiliary Forces. Well, I do not quarrel with that. But who will pretend that the Reservist we can take from the Auxiliary Forces will be as well qualified as is the Reservist who has been pronounced to be inefficient? As I explained the other day, the Militiaman under the present system, apart from any increased training, would require sixteen years service in order to obtain the same amount of training as the soldier who has been trained for two years with the colours. When I am told that these men are unsatisfactory and useless, I ask how can that proposition be maintained when we are asked to put in their place men who have received only one-sixteenth of their training? I must not be told that these men are ineffective for the purposes of war; they receive exactly the same training as the Reservists of every Continental country with the exception of Holland and Switzerland. I ask, are we right or wrong in endeavouring to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the War with respect to the formation of a larger Reserve?

There is another document, the Report of the Royal Commission with regard to the Auxiliary Forces, which was presented shortly after I assumed office. That Report was perfectly specific; there was no mistake about the value which was placed on the Auxiliary Forces under their present organisation. I believe that the Report was received with a certain amount of favour by all sections; at any rate it was an impartial Report, and one which emanated, to a large extent, from officers of the Auxiliary Forces. It pointed out certain blemishes in the constitution of the Auxiliary Forces which it would have been folly on the part of any Administration to pass over unheeded. If the facts contained in that Report are correct, then I say it is the positive duty of the War Minister to take notice of them and try to remedy them. Hon. Members have suggested that I have proposed to go far in advance of the recommendations of that Report. That, I think, is inexact. I have not made any such proposal to the House.

Hon. Members suggest that we ought to make use of the Militia to perform the duties of the Regular Army, and one of the principal reasons given is that you cannot obtain a short-service Army concurrently with a long-service Army, because the difficulties of recruiting are so great. There have been a great many prophecies made in regard to recruiting; I have ventured to doubt some of them, and hitherto do not think I have been inaccurate in my forecasts. I readily admit that if you attempt to recruit long and short-service men side by side under anything like the same conditions you will not get long-service men. But this difficulty is not peculiar to our administration; the difficulty of recruiting is an eternal difficulty to the War Office and the country. My belief is that if you make the distinction between the two classes of men sufficiently marked, if you make the attractions offered to long-service men sufficient, if you give them that guarantee of employment which I desire to give, and that great advance of pay which the new service pay enables us to give, you will be able to do in the Army what you have been able to do in the Navy—you will be able to get two classes of men side by side. Hon. Members seem to think that that is a new thing, but it is not; for under another name it has been going on year after year. We have had up to a few months ago tens of thousands of men enlisted in the Army for three years; they have been paid at a low rate, and have been entitled to leave the Army at the end of their term, and they enlisted entirely for service at home. We have had, concurrently, some tens of thousands of men who have been enlisted for seven, eight, and nine years, who have been receiving a higher rate of pay, and who have been serving abroad. Now, is it or is it not reasonable to divide those two sets of men according to the circumstances under which they serve? Short-service men in the future will be in exactly the same position, and long-service men too, in reference to service abroad. If the short-service man desires to make the military career his own, he can adopt it just as he could two years ago. I ask whether it is not worth while to make that experiment. It is an experiment by which we make a distinction between the two classes of men.

Let me now come to the Militia. It has been said that I propose to injure the Militia and to abolish the Militia. I have made no proposal which by even the widest stretch of imagination could be described in these terms. On August 8th last year, just after I laid the proposals before the House, I gave a pledge that no action should be taken with regard to the Militia that was not agreeable to the wishes of the Militia. I now repeat that there is no proposal before the House to take the Militia battalions for the short-service Army against the wishes of the Militia. I have now ample evidence that, if the offer were given to the Militia battalions to take this service upon them, that offer would be responded to with alacrity by officers and men. We need not go far to seek the reason why. One hon. Member told us that an entirely different class of men go into the Militia; that is a mistake. [Cries of "No."] I will prove it. I am quite positive that half of many battalions, and more than half of other battalions, both officers and men, go into the Militia for the sole purpose of serving for a longer period than the Militia period. Therefore it cannot be described as a revolution if those officers and men are given that opportunity. I will put the thing to the test. If the thing is not congenial to the Militia it will not be done by the Militia. But I have sufficient confidence in the evidence which I have received to feel convinced that if the opportunity were given to the Militia they would accept it.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that this invitation is to be given to the Force piecemeal?

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS: Supposing a battalion accepts the offer, what will be its condition?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The condition of the hon. Member's own battalion will be precisely what it is now in every particular. Its establishment is 1,061 men. It has 480 men, or 581 men short of its establishment. I do not know whether the effect of the Bill, which will make it compulsory on the men who enter that battalion to go abroad, will be to increase or diminish its strength. I am inclined to believe it will increase it. But there will be no change in any way respecting that battalion. With regard to the recommendation of the Norfolk Commission that the Militia should be given a longer training, we desire to make that experiment and to ascertain whether it could be carried out with advantage to the Militia.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the invitation he speaks of is to be conveyed separately to the different Militia units, or generally to the whole force?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It cannot possibly be conveyed to the whole force.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: Then it will be done piecemeal?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No; it is not to be done piecemeal. The opportunity will be given to the battalions which are required, and if they do not desire to accept the invitation they will not accept the invitation.

As to the recommendation of the Norfolk Commission, it is that the training of the Militia should be increased to six months on enlistment. I am not quite clear whether that would be so acceptable to the Militia as is supposed. I have before me the evidence of the Militia officer who spoke for the Militia Rifle Association—Colonel Holden. He said he considered that any attempt to lengthen the annual training of the men would be absolutely fatal to the force, as it was impossible for men in employment to get more than twenty-eight days in the year for training. I think we ought to pass the Bill enabling us to use the Militia abroad before we make these changes, because until then we cannot test the willingness of the Militia to accept these conditions. If recruits enlist under these obligations, we can then see if they will consent to extend the period of training. I believe that they will; and that the ideal period of training is not the six months recommended by the Norfolk Commission but a longer one. All differences could be reconciled easily if this period were continued for a year. The moment you get a year's training on enlistment you get the whole territorial feeling with you. I have communications from nearly every county town in England offering to grant facilities with regard to training grounds, barracks, and ranges, provided we can quarter a territorial regiment in the district. You cannot do that unless the regiment is embodied, at any rate, for one year. If you bring out a battalion for six months, you have to consider a class of officers who almost cease to be civilians without becoming officers. How many Members of this House can give up six months in the year to attending the training of their battalions? How many would not give up a month or six weeks to working with a battalion in existence? I believe that the period of six months training may prove to be very inconvenient to officers and men; and though in obedience to the recommendations of the Report the experiment ought to be tried, I am not sure that the Militia will not prefer a longer or a shorter period of training.

With regard to the Volunteers, hon. Members have asked me how it is proposed to make this reduction? We have proposed a very small reduction in the current year; and I am confident it can be made, without interference with the earnings or efficiency of the Volunteer corps, by putting into force our new regulations with regard to the standard of physical examination of the men. If we once get to this starting point, the whole problem will be left to the commanding officers of the Volunteer battalions. The moment you can introduce a reallocation of the capitation grant the problem becomes easy. At present it pays the Volunteer officer to take any one. I want to alter that, and put the Volunteer officer in this position—that he will be equally well remunerated if he exercises selection; and directly you equalise the incidence of the capitation grant, and enable an officer to earn more money for an efficient man than he now does for an inefficient man, that would be possible. A distinguished Volunteer officer told me that he could dispense with 500 men of his own regiment with advantage if it would not involve pecuniary loss. I want the Volunteer commanding officer to be in the position of the Yeomanry officer, so that the better he makes his regiment the greater will be the pecuniary advantage. I wish to relieve him of the necessity under which he now stands of having to recruit every man, good, bad, or indifferent, who comes to his office, because he is worth 35s. to him, and he cannot afford to lose the money. I believe that as in the Yeomanry you will thus level up the character of the force until those regiments which are now pointed to as the flower of the force are only samples of the bulk.

*Mr. McCRAE inquired how the establishment of the Volunteers was to be reduced by 114,000 men without interfering with the battalions now existing.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That is not difficult. The establishment has been for years merely a fancy figure. It has had no relation to the battalions or to the strength of the Volunteers. There is another possibility of reduction. I may mention one case the other day of a company supposed to be eighty strong which turned out on inspection thirteen strong. There was considerable objection to the reduction of that company, but it was reduced, and I believe the country has been in no sense a loser by that reduction. The hon. Member for Stroud asked if the reduction was meant to apply to units as units because they were outlying. Certainly not, but every one will agree, if there are units of the kind I have described, it is better they should cease to be units. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Walsall asked a Question with regard to finance. It is too late to enter at any great length into that question; but he did point out a not very cheering prospect of the difficulties which will arise in the future, as in the past, with regard to the expenditure of money on the Army, and he painted a very dark picture of what the future might produce. I cannot counter any of his arguments. I believe this expenditure will have to be met whatever Administration is in power, but I do not quite accept the gloomy conclusion he arrived at. I believe if you reduce the strength of the battalions you can reduce expenditure, but I do not contest that the right hon. Gentleman was right with regard to all the items of which he spoke, that they are under present conditions irreducible and will have to be met.

The hon. Member for Dorset made one of those rough and ready suggestions of which we have had a good many during the course of these debates. He suggested that we could save a great deal of money by simply reducing the battalions to 500 men. That is an example of the danger of discussing these matters without some more intimate acquaintance with the real internal economy of the War Office. The hon. Member had a doctrine, with which I entirely agree, that it would be disastrous to reduce units. But he said, "all you have to do is to reduce the battalion to 500 strong, and there you are." That is a mistake. The moment you do that you will cease to find any drafts for the Indian battalions or the necessary facilities for mobilisation in time of war.

Major SEELY: That is what you proposed.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I proposed a reduced establishment and a short-service term. I proposed it on a battalion which should not send drafts to India, which makes all the difference. Another hon. Member suggested that we might get over many of our difficulties by recruiting boys for the Army like the Navy. There was a great deal in what he said with which I have a great deal of sympathy; but that, again, is one of those proposals which will not bear close examination. The difficulty is in the Army that you have to find employment for these boys from the time they come in at fifteen until they become soldiers at eighteen. You cannot employ them in the relative number of Navy boys in the regiment between those ages. Although I believe the valuable work done by the Duke of York's School might be extended, I am confident you cannot adopt the suggestion of my hon. and gallant friend.

We have had a long and, I am sure, very useful discussion on these matters. I still feel that there has been no contribution, such as I hoped might be obtained, to the solution of this very difficult problem. The problem is there, and it will remain. I venture to express the belief that these propositions which have been ridiculed and attacked so frequently and from so many quarters will, after all, be, in a form closely resembling the present, made the solution of these problems. You must deal with this question of a Reserve. When you have to make your Reserve you will find out that short-service recruiting is essential. You will have to keep up your Army in India and the Colonies, and you will find out that long-service enlistment is essential to the maintenance of that Army. If you go back to the seven and five years service you will not get your Reserve and you will have an enormous increase in the Army Estimates; you will then be irresistibly led to the conclusion that you must effect great reductions in the Regular Army; you may reduce some sixteen battalions of the Line; in doing so a great mistake will be made, and the proposition will be set aside because you will be reducing units, and you will be destroying that which is invaluable to the Army-trained officers. You will find, just as I have found, that when you come to destroy historical units of the British Army you will have entered on a task that is practically impossible, so uncongenial to the people of this country, and so unprofitable that you will have to recede from it. You will find that, so long as you make the Militia and the Line competing services, you will never get the proper quality or quantity of officers and men. When you go round to depot after depot, as I have done, and study the particulars of the Militia battalions you will find that what I have said is true—that, whilst 35,000 men are going in and out of the Militia, the 23,000 Militia recruits under twenty years of age will not furnish you with the material you think they ought to furnish, and hope they will furnish. You will be driven to the same conclusion as that to which I have been driven. Having before you exactly the same facts your conclusions will be identical.

With regard to the Volunteers, you will have before you the alternative of asking for an immense addition to the Estimates to provide for a purpose which even then you will not fulfil, because the more money you give under present conditions, the more money you will be required to give, without achieving the object you have in view. You will come to the same conclusion that I have come to—that you must improve the quality at the risk of diminishing the number of the Volunteers. The Army Council is doing all it can to produce a Reserve of officers. We have already done so with regard to cavalry. When I say that under our present system the better the regiment the worse the promotion I have said enough to show that there may be some advantage in having a larger exchange of officers throughout the regiments of infantry. But the question of the shortage of officers has never ceased to occupy the attention of the Army Council. It is treated almost as a paramount question. If the House will do me the favour to read the proposals I have made, they will find the question of officers is dealt with at every stage. I have been accused of obscurity with regard to these matters, I do not think the charge is well founded. [Mr. CHURCHILL: Inconsistency.] There is neither ambiguity nor inconsistency in my proposals. [Mr. CHURCHILL: Absolute contradiction.] I do not know how that may strike the hon. Member. I do not plead guilty to the charge. I have not been able to gather from the speeches that have been made that there is any one quite so clear in his mind as to what he thinks is to the advantage of the Army as I am. I will explain what I mean.

Not a single speech made has been a constructive speech; and I believe that until hon. Members devote their minds to constructive as well as to purely destructive criticism, we shall get no further. I honestly believe that the main lines of Army reform are to be found in the proposals I have laid before the House, and I look forward with confidence to every one of those proposals being carried out.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) thought that hon. Members on his side of the House and many on the other side would agree with him that there was much that was uncertain and nebulous, and little that was certain in the right hon. Gentleman's statement of policy, but one thing was certain and that was that he intended to diminish the number of our citizen soldiers. The general election was at hand and he wanted hon. Members to figure to themselves what answer they would return if they were asked, "Did you on the 6th of April vote for the reduction of the Volunteer force." According as they determined how to answer that question would they determine the lobby into which they would go.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 209; Noes, 167. (Division List No. 105.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hon.A.J.(Manch'r.
Balfour,Rt.Hn.GeraldW(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C.T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F(Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Right Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt.Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish,V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale,Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,PhilipS.(Warwick,S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, SirAugustus Frederick
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,MajEvans-(T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst,Rt.Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray Ernest (West Ham)
Green,Walford D.(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F.Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,SirJames(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson,SirA.(Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard,Jno.(Kent,Faversham
Hozier,Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Kenyon, Hon.Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence,SirJoseph(Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks,NR.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col.Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Frances (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W.F.
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon.J.Scott(Hants.)

Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan,DavidJ.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Alymer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel,Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpont, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Smith,RtHnJ.Parker(Lanarks)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon.ArthurOrmskirk
Stanley,Rt.Hon.Lord(Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P,
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,CaptE.C(S.Andrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts).
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay,Alexander (LanarkNE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,VincentP.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal,W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJosephF.(Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan,Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John ((Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Poulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, SirR.Threshie(Dumfries
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)

Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donald
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—
Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
Mr. William M'Arthur.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, Mr. Speaker proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 214; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 106.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hn Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn A J (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt-Col. H F (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J H M (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C. W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S.W.
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gorst, Rt Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J F (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col W
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee

Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt. Hn. J Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tennant, Harold John
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt-Col ACE (Taunton)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W H (Yorks.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Causton, Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Ellice, Capt. E. C. (S Andrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander(Lanark, NE.
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, JKeir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E
Johnson, John
Jones, DavidBrynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir JosephF(Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Reginald
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.

Seely, Maj J E B (Isle of Wight)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt Hn C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters(N.Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—
Sir Thomas Esmonde and
Captain Donelan.

Question put accordingly, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided:—Ayes, 190; Noes, 146. (Division List No. 107.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, RtHn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt HonSir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn. A.J.(Manch'r.)
Balfour, Rt Hn.Gerald W.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth, R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bentick, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H.F(Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Coltson, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott.
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J.(Man'cr
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'gas)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzgerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S.(Warwick, S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin &Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'rH'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D.(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas.(Staffords. N.W.
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Favers'm
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt Hn. Arthur Fred.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool
Lawson, Hn.H.L.W. (Mile End)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt. HnSirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesh.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander

Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, RtHn. J. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Asher Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt. E. C. (SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hn. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardie, J Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Johnson, John
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfred (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, A. Walters (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, SirJ. T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. M'Crae and Major Seely.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) moved to leave out Sub-section 1, which enacted that the "Army Act shall be and remain in force." Nobody knew, he said, what the Army Act was, especially those who were specially affected by it. They had that day passed a Resolution finding the money for the Regular Forces of this country, some 227,000 in number, and he did not think it was too much to say that there were not less than 226,000 out of that number who had not the vaguest notion of what the Army Act under which they were to be governed for the next twelve months was. Anybody who was acquainted with the Army knew perfectly well that no steps were taken by the military authorities to make the provisions of the Act known to the men who were controlled by it. The Army Act contained 200 sections, and consisted of 200 or 300 pages, and it was most difficult for an expert lawyer to find his way through it. How very much more difficult it would be for the private soldier to do so. No copies of the Act were to be found in any of the barracks so as to be available for the use of the non-commissioned officer or the private soldier. He thought that in every sergeants' mess and in every regimental canteen there should be a copy which should be available for the use of the units who formed the Regular Army. Very few of the men had even the vaguest notion of the penalties to which they rendered themselves liable by taking the King's shilling. There were no less than five parts of this Act, and however much they disapproved of its provisions, they could not, under the present system of presenting an Army (Annual) Bill consisting of two or three clauses, amend the measure. He took one particular thing which they were all interested in. Under the Army Act no man could be enlisted for more than twelve years. That might be a good or it might be a bad provision, but it ought to be possible to bring that fact home to the knowledge of the private soldier and to the officers. They were, however, absolutely powerless to move in this particular. There was another point to which he wished to draw the attention of the Committee, and he was told it was a good legal point, although he was not competent to solve it. Under Section 176 the Army Act was applied to men serving in a force which had been raised outside the limits of the United Kingdom or in India and serving under Regular officers. Did the Act apply to a unit serving outside of India and the United Kingdom if it happened to be commanded by Militia officers? There were many forces, especially in Somaliland, which were commanded by Militia officers. Were those forces covered by the Army Act? Another question which involved a nice point of management but not of law was that this Act was applied to Volunteers when collected together if there happened to be two or three Regular soldiers in camp, but it did not apply to Volunteers gathered together in large numbers and under a certain amount of military control if there did not happen to be one or two Regular soldiers in camp. This raised a question of policy which they were not able to discuss, but he would ask whether, if the Act did not apply to Volunteers when so engaged, it ought not to be made to apply in future.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 23, to leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Charles Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out to the second word 'the,' in page 2, line 26, stand part of the clause."

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) said the hon. Member was under a misapprehension in saying that the Army Act was inaccessible to soldiers and was not available for their use. It was printed in the Manual of Military Law, and it was distributed to all persons concerned.

The Act had been proposed for many years in the same form, and there was no intention of making any change either in its form or substance.

Mr. CHURCHILL (Oldham) inquired if the Act did not largely consist of a number of charges formulated in legal and military language, to deal with officers who were guilty of military crimes. He presumed that he was right in assuming that these charges had not in any way been altered from the particular charges which had been before them on every previous year. Therefore he asked the Secretary of State for War this Question: Why was it when they were going through the form of elaborately passing this code in regard to a great number of charges under which Courts-martial could be held, so many officers were dismissed from the Army, not by a regular trial but by a purely arbitrary process of dismissal, which was carried out by the War Office itself. He submitted that it was unnecessarily taking up the time of the Committee for them to be asked to go through the form of passing this elaborate code under this Act, unless when officers were said to have committed offences which were chargeable under the forms of this Act they should be given the opportunity of a trial by Court-martial. He observed that there was one charge set forth in the Act which would cover a very celebrated case which occurred two years ago. The words dealt with any officer guilty of wilfully neglecting his duty and were formally set out in the Act, and yet an officer of the 2nd Life Guards, who was accused of not having taken steps to put down disorder in his regiment, was not brought to trial under this Act but was dismissed by the War Office, without being heard in his own defence, and without having an opportunity of calling witnesses in his own defence. He admitted that the military authorities must have a discretionary power of selection, and if an officer was unsuitable should be able to dismiss him from the Army on the ground that it was not for the advantage of the public service that he should be retained He did not challenge that great power, but it should be very sparingly used, and whenever it was possible to bring an officer to trial by Court-martial, he should be so brought to trial, and whenever the accusation came within the 200 charges of this Army Act the officer should be so brought to trial. South African cases had occurred where officers had been dismissed from the Army, not because they were not qualified but because they had committed some offence in regard to which some charge could be made under this Act, but the War Office, instead of going through the form of Court-martial, chose to exercise its arbitrary power. He was one of those who thought that Courts-martial should be much more frequent in the higher portions of the Army than they now were. It would be much better to have a trial instead of hustling officers out without inquiry in cases in which they were clearly amenable to law. One of the cases referred to an officer in South Africa who raised the white flag—a very disgraceful thing to do, as he was sure the hon. Member for Peckham would agree, as he was the only member of the protectionist party who did not raise the white flag the other night when there was a division on.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I wish to ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether it is in order to discuss the case of an officer which occurred some time ago under the Army Annual Act.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A case of that kind would be rather remote, but of course the hon. Gentleman can discuss the original Act.

Mr. CHURCHILL said his desire was to call attention to the growth of the impropriety of dismissing officers without trial when they could be tried in the Army by being court-martialled. He feared that very often men were dismissed through pure personal spite. There was the case against an officer who, if the charge against him was true, committed a disgraceful offence, for which he could have been shot if he had been tried. But nothing of the sort happened. The War Office did not like trying officers by Courts-martial, they would much rather smuggle them out of the Army and not have a scandal. It was this practice which resulted in half of the injustices which existed in the Army. In the Navy, however, officers were frequently tried by Court-martial for dereliction of duty, and he put forward the plea that a similar course should be followed in the Army for the protection of officers. He heard a case the other day, which occurred in South Africa, of a lieutenant-colonel who was accused of having used some insolent language to the officer commanding his district. The language of the Army Act would have covered that, and the War Office could have charged that officer in such a way as would have allowed him to bring evidence forward in his own defence. But what did the War Office do? They did not avail themselves of this Act, they found it much more convenient to tell the wretched officer that he was placed on half pay. He wrote immediately and asked for the protection to which he was entitled, but was told that no further communication would be entertained. He wrote to the King, but that was a mere formality—it would not be respectful to say a mere farce—and the answer was held by the same officials who dealt with the case before, that they had carefully investigated the case and saw no occasion to reopen it. He took advantage of this case to impress upon the Secretary of State for War that while they did not wish to challenge his power of selection or his discretionary power to deal with officers who commanded the War Office units, still he respectfully submitted that no officer should be dismissed from the Army without a trial by Court-martial when he was accused of any action which could be brought fairly and squarely under any charge laid down in this Act. Unless they got some definite evidence that the War Office was returning to the practice which was formerly much more used than it was now, and that the clauses of the Army Act would be actually operative clauses and would give protection to the officers, it was quite certain that they could enjoy no security of tenure and could be dismissed from the Army on trumped up charges which would not be listened to in the case of private soldiers. So long as this policy was continued officers were under a grave disadvantage, and the Members of the House had every reason to complain that they were obliged to go through the elaborate form of passing all these charges in the Army Act when no use was made of them and they did not afford individuals the protection which they desired.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said his hon. friend had raised a point of the greatest importance, which he hoped the Secretary of State would reply to. In considering the Army Act, obviously the first question they had to consider was to whom it applied. Under Section 176 it was said that some of the persons to whom the Act applied were non-commissioned officers and men serving in a force raised by order of His Majesty beyond the limits of the United Kingdom or in India, and serving under the command of an officer of the Regular Forces. But supposing that these men were serving under the command of a Militia officer, as had been very frequently the case on the West Coast of Africa, in such an event they would not come under the Army Act, and the point to which he wished to direct the attention of the Secretary of State was whether the men were a penny the worse off for not coming under this Act. If it was not necessary to bring a portion of our military forces under the Army Act, why was it necessary to bring another portion under it? Unless there was some explanation of why the distinction was drawn he could not see why the Army Act should apply to one portion of the Army and not to the other.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he understood that there were Militia officers on the West Coast of Africa in charge of Colonial forces, and he should like to know whether they would come under this section. He also wished to make a point upon the Amendment in reference to the importance of giving a man some opportunity of obtaining information as to the Army Act. It was very long and complicated, and it was a matter of great importance to Parliament itself to see that soldiers could procure a copy of the book on Army regulations. This might cost 2s. 6d. or 3s., and they could not expect the ordinary soldier to afford that expenditure. If, however, they had books like this placed where they could have easy access to them there would be no difficulty at all. They were very important to officers, but they were matters of life and death to the ordinary soldier. He thought Ministers ought to be very glad that some portions of the Army Act did not apply to them. To take an offence which was punishable by death—

> "He who misbehaves or causes others to misbehave in the presence of the enemy in such a manner as to show cowardice shall, on being found guilty, by Court-martial, suffer death."

He thought dissolution would be better than that. He did not know how the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would come out, because another offence with the same penalty applied to a man who "leaves his commanding officer to go in search of plunder." Then, again, the Prime Minister would come very badly out of it, because a man who shamefully abandoned his post was also punished with death. He was afraid that, on the whole, Ministers would come out very badly.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The principle of the Act and the Act itself is referred to in this section, and the hon. Member can refer to it, but he is not in order in discussing the Act.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was not discussing the Act, but was quoting it as an example to Ministers. He was simply congratulating Ministers on being exempt from the Army Act. The private soldier was liable to these penalties, and the least he thought the War Office could do would be to supply copies of this document to the soldiers who were liable to dismissal penalties and death for breaches of regulations of this character. After all, how many people knew what was in this Act of Parliament? It was a very complicated Act and there were something like 126 pages of it. The common soldier could not make himself master of these things, and he thought that after the Act itself had been supplied there should be a summary furnished—a cheap manual which the soldier could get in his barrack-room.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he did not quite follow the Secretary of State when he said that the Army Act was accessible to the soldier. He knew that when they went into camp with the Regular Forces it was obligatory for the commanding officer to read the Army Act to the soldiers under his command, but he understood that it was the practice in all garrisons that they should have only one copy of the Army Act, and that was placed in the orderly room, which was not accessible to the soldier. He would like the Secretary of State for War to say in his reply how this matter stood and whether some other means should not be taken to spread a knowledge of the provisions of the Act. The penalties were very serious and the Act might be made available in the canteen or in any other room which soldiers frequented. He wished to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman that the Act should be in a place accessible to the soldier who had to be tried under it so that he might know the offences with which he might be charged and the penalties for those offences.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said that hon. Members who had made themselves acquainted with the provisions of the Act would have observed that the *status* of the Militia in regard to the Regular Forces was most carefully defined. It was laid down under what circumstances the Militia came under the provisions of this Act. Under certain circumstances when they were engaged with Regular troops they were under the Army Act, but when they were otherwise engaged they were not. In the case of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, in order that the Militia should act under the Army Act, those places had to be regarded as colonies. The Isle of Wight was not specifically mentioned in the same category, but he intended to propose that it should be so included. He only mentioned these details in order to point out that in so far as the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman applied to the Militia the Committee were really absolutely in the dark. They had again and again asked for certain details but none had been given. Their natural course therefore was to use every possible Motion to endeavour to extract that information which they had been denied. They somewhat resented having to pass Estimates in regard to which they could not get any information.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: May I ask if this is in any way relevant?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is travelling quite outside the limits of the question. The words of the section refer to the question of the time during which the Army Act shall be in force. The hon. Member is going quite outside that question.

MAJOR SEELY said that he rose to point out that the Militia under this Army Act would be affected in a peculiar manner by any alteration in their *status*. If he was not in order in so doing he would defer his remarks till a later stage. It was, however, of importance to learn exactly what the proposals of the Government were in regard to the Militia.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) thought that the Committee had a right to discuss this matter further. The Chairman had stated that the Acts of Parliament which were made by means of reference in this Act were outside of the discussion. He thought that that was a new ruling because of the previous statutes passed into law by this Bill, and if they were made law by it he thought they had a right to discuss them. Any Act which was to be enforced by the passing of this Bill, he thought, was a subject which might fairly be discussed under the clause which enacted it. He appealed to the Secretary of State for War to have the same sympathy with regard to Courts-martial that he had before he was in office. He remembered several speeches of the right hon. Gentleman in which he urged that the Army should act in the same way as the Navy and hold Courts-martial instead of carrying out the arbitrary decisions of the War Office without trying the officers. He was sorry to see the right hon. Gentleman shake his head because he supposed they would in consequence get an unsatisfactory answer. He supported the proposals that the provisions of this Act should be made more easily accessible to the soldier than they were now. The Manual of Military Law cost 5s. 6d., and there were in consequence of its price very few soldiers who possessed it. That work was only kept in the orderly room but it should, he urged, be kept within reach of the non-commissioned officers and men.

MR. CHURCHILL rose to ask the Secretary of State for War to reply to the Question which he had seriously asked. He wished to draw attention to the peculiar and novel form of Clause 2 of the Bill. It was entirely different to the form which used to prevail in other years. The Bill was made up of three clauses, and this Clause 2 was so arranged as to carry within its scope clauses which were contained in the Army Act. That was done, he supposed, for the purpose of passing the Bill through the House. It said that the Army Act "shall be and remain in force during the period hereinafter mentioned." Therefore he thought it necessary to remind the Committee as to what the Army Act did specifically enact. He found that on March 4th, 1903, the late Mr. Hanbury attacked it very gravely, and usefully examined this measure in all its details, and so exhaustive and careful was the examination of the measure that there were twenty-four divisions demanded by that right hon. Gentleman. He was indeed made right hon. Gentleman in consequence of his prowess. He found that on that occasion hon. Members were empowered to discuss all the clauses in the Army Act which dealt with minor punishments. He thought that a great many too many soldiers were sent to prison under this Act, and that it would be better if they were sent not to short terms of imprisonment but to long terms of confinement to barracks. Twenty-four thousand soldiers suffered imprisonment under this Act last year, and that was a very serious state of things. It was important that a matter of that kind should not be brought on at that late hour. Under the provisions they were assenting to, the whole land forces of the Crown would be governed, ruled, and punished for the next twelve months. If there were 24,000 soldiers who had been punished, did it not show either that the demand for a character upon a man entering the Army had not been insisted upon, or that the system was petty, capricious, and vexatious? In other words, did it not show that the system of administering justice in the Army was unsympathetic, and was much more capricious and severe than was necessary? He was asking the right hon. Gentleman a Question, and he thought it would be better for him to pay attention to the debate. [Cries of "Order!"] Hon. Members who said "Order, Order" were unacquainted with the rules of the House. He was quite in order in asking that the right hon. Gentleman should give attention to the debate.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am paying ample attention to the debate, but I am not compelled to gaze upon the hon. Member all the time.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Oh, I do not mind that as long as I am not called upon to reciprocate. What he wanted to know was whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that under this Act no fewer than 24,000 men were convicted and sent to prison each year. Did not the right hon. Gentleman think that the number of these men could be reduced, and that he could reduce the disgraceful number of minor punishments in the Army, and substitute for them punishments which, although detested by the soldiers, involved no permanent reproach. When the Leader of the Opposition was in the position which the right hon. Gentleman held, he did not sit there hoping that this clause would be hurried through. He rose again and again, and endeavoured to give information on all the various points raised. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman two Questions; the first had reference to the enormous number of imprisonments in the Army, and the second to the undue use by the War Office of the form of dismissal from the service of officers without trial.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that he was rather bewildered to find that all these points were in order because he should have thought they were questions of administration.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): That is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER repeated that they were points of administration. He had always agreed that Courts-martial were very good things indeed, but it was a mere question of administrative detail as to how far the discretion which, of course, must be vested in the War Office should be exercised or not. He agreed that officers accused of a crime should be given an opportunity of having a Court-martial, but he thought that in every case it must be a matter of discretion as to how far the powers conferred upon the War Office should be utilised or not utilised. As to the number of men in prison, the hon. Member was under a misapprehension, because he had taken the number of cases of imprisonment and not the number of men imprisoned. It was no doubt a subject of regret that any man in the Army should be in prison at all, but that matter could not be settled by that House. He did not think there was any reason for altering the form of the clause, and no Amendment could be accepted by the Government with that object.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said the point which was made was that practically the soldier had no access to the Army Act, but even if he had access to the book which contained it it would be of very little use to him. What he wanted to emphasise, therefore, was whether it would not be possible to have something in the nature of a text book dealing with points in which the soldier was interested. The points as to punishment, etc., might be given, but not the whole of these 190 clauses which the ordinary soldier could not digest or carry in his mind. It was a question of considerable importance and one to which the right hon. Gentleman might well, he thought, give attention. Such a small text book could easily be drawn up, and then there would be a chance of each individual soldier really understanding what were the offences for which he could be punished, and these 24,000 offences would probably in that case be considerably reduced.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tidvil) said he rose to emphasise the suggestion which had just been made about preparing an abstract of the provisions of this Act which should not merely be available for the use of soldiers after they had enlisted, but in order that those who desired to enlist might become acquainted with the conditions of service before they did enlist. It would be easy to follow the example set by the Factory Acts and the Mines Regulation Acts. Those were very elaborate documents, but an abstract of them was made, and it was compulsory upon an employer to have that abstract exhibited in a conspicuous position, where it could be seen and read, not merely by persons employed but by persons applying for employment. He rose for the purpose of asking whether the right hon. Gentleman would not agree to the introduction of a short Amendment, so that the provisions of the law should be made known to every soldier and to those about to become soldiers. This much he knew, that if applicants for enlistment were aware of the conditions under which they were to join, the nature of the offences and the punishments, the enlistments would be much fewer than at present. He did not think the Committee should sanction a system of enlistment under false pretences, and men should clearly understand that by becoming soldiers they were giving up their rights of citizenship. The object of the Act they were now passing was to take these men from the purview of the ordinary law and place them under a law of which they knew nothing. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, in the interests of the Army and of honesty, would agree to some form of words being inserted which would make it obligatory upon recruiting officers and others to summarise briefly what the duties of recruits were to be, what contituted offences, and what were the punishments which attached to those offences. If this were done he felt sure that a better class of man would be obtained and the standing and *morale* of the Army would be increased.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that when a soldier enlisted he surrendered a large portion of his liberty and for a large number of offences, instead of being tried by the civil law, he was tried by the military law. The punishments, moreover, were far more severe, and many things which were perfectly justifiable on the part of a private citizen were made unjustifiable by military law from the fact that the soldier had been deprived of the ordinary rights of civilians. It was true he acquired a right to be tried by Court-martial for offences which were not applicable to anybody but a soldier, but that right was often taken away. The whole thing was thoroughly and absolutely unjust. No doubt the head of every department had the power to turn out an employee who was inefficient, but he could not punish him. The Secretary of State for War said he must retain his power to turn out people who were inefficient. Let him retain that power, but let him not extend it to cases where the law had laid down what steps were to be taken if a soldier was suspected of an offence and the punishment he was to be subjected to. In those cases Parliament had laid it down that the War Office should not cashier an officer and turn him out of the Army because they were afraid to bring him before a Court-martial, and thus deprive him of the benefits and guarantees given by the Act.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that Section 176 laid it down that non-commissioned officers and men serving in a force raised by order of His Majesty beyond the limits of the United Kingdom and India, but serving under the command of an officer of the Army, should be subject to military law. There were a great number of units in the Protectorates and Colonies which had been raised outside the United Kingdom and India, and they were principally commanded on active service by officers of the Militia force. Were those men when commanded by an officer of the Militia force, if they did an illegal act, under military law? It was provided that nothing in this Act should affect the law as regarded a colony, but there was a difference between a colony and a protectorate. The Act said that soldiers were subject to a certain law in a colony. Were they subject to the same law in a protectorate? They were entitled to have an interpretation of the Act from the War Office.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) inquired as a point of order whether hon. Members could raise every point and every section of the Army Act upon the clause before the House. Could they discuss the time it had been in force and where it had to be enforced?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, upon the point of order, said that it was a very important one. The clause was practically a re-enactment of the Army Act and said—

> "The Army Act shall be and remain in force during the period hereinafter mentioned."

If these words were not passed the Army Act would not be in operation at all. Therefore he submitted that they were entitled to discuss the Act which would be in existence during this period. He contended it would be quite competent for them to move as an Amendment "except Section 130," and so on.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the preamble of this Act recited that the raising or keeping of a standing Army within the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in time of peace was against the law. Surely an Act which governed the Army and was renewed from year to year was capable of discussion in the House.

Mr. CHURCHILL wished to point out that the provisions of the Army Act which was re-enacted by this clause were very numerous. In the year 1893 a most distinguished man—Mr. Jeffreys—dealt with this Act during the discussion of this Bill.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: On the point of order, I said before that it is not in order to go into the particulars of the Act, nor can the Act be discussed clause by clause, but it is in order to refer to the Act. It is mentioned in this clause and it is in order to refer to it, but I have already expressed my opinion that hon. Members should not go into too great detail.

Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) wished to know whether it was in order to move Amendments to the original Act on this Bill.

Major SEELY said the appendix of the Army Act made the matter quite clear, and his hon. friend the Member for Oldham had shown that much detail was gone into in a previous year. There were not any alterations made in the Army Act as it stood in 1901 by the Army (Annual) Acts of 1902, and 1903, but in previous years alterations were made, and if alterations were made in the Army Act by the Army (Annual) Act it must be apparent that these alterations were alterations in detail and must have been made through the discussion of the Act as they were discussing it now.

Mr. CHURCHILL said he understood the Chairman's ruling and should strictly adhere to it.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he wished to resume the observations he was making when the hon. Member raised a point of order in which he was clearly wrong.

Mr. DISRAELI again rose to call attention to a point of order but——

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the point of order had been sufficiently raised. He would watch the debate and would call the hon. Member to order if he transgressed.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE again asked if the sub-section would be applicable to troops serving in protectorates.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER replied that, where a Regular officer was in command, the Act was applicable, where the commanding officer was not a Regular the local Ordinance was applicable, and he was under the law as it existed in the colony.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman would answer the reasonable Question which had been put to him. Was it reasonable to suppose that the ordinary soldier would become acquainted with the 190 clauses of the Army Act which to him were nothing less than legal jargon. Its contents should be put into a small leaflet or book and the soldier should know the character of the sentences to which he was subject.

* **Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said the Act was circulated in a form in which it was easily accessible to the private soldier. It was in every orderly room, and no complaint had ever been received as to the way in which it was circulated. The War Office could not undertake to adopt the suggestion that they should circulate an abstract, because the terms upon which a soldier entered the Army were perfectly clear. The Army Act was perfectly accessible, and he believed soldiers were acquainted with the general conditions under which they served.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER thought it was a monstrous statement to say that a book in the orderly room was within the reach of every soldier. The soldier could not go into the orderly room.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: He can go into the library.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER insisted that in spite of what had been said the book was inaccessible to the private soldier.

Major SEELY said he had sat on Courts-martial many times, and it would surprise him if many soldiers had ever heard of this Act. He wished to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to an extraordinary fact which he made bold to say the right hon. Gentleman never knew of before. If a soldier got into a four-wheeled cab in which there were already four persons, did the right hon. Gentleman know what the penalty was? If this were done by an ordinary man the penalty he would suffer would be of the smallest, and, in the absence of any provision, 6d. would be sufficient. If an officer did it he would be cashiered because he overcrowded a cab, while a private soldier would suffer imprisonment. The penalties were savage. They all knew what imprisonment meant in the case of a soldier, and sentences of 100 days imprisonment were by no means uncommon, and to inflict such a penalty in the case of a soldier, and to cashier and ruin an officer because he got into a cab with four other persons when the cabman said, "I don't wish to take you," was obviously quite unjust. If this provision were brought to the notice of soldiers and officers he was sure they would object.

Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 158; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 108.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hn. Sir H.
Bailey James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon, Thos. H. A. E
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick

Gordon, Hn J E (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans-(T'rH'mlet
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (Lnd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords, NW
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N.R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt. Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, WJH (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C (S Andrw's Bghs)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Klibride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.

Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Tomkinson, James
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtney T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (NDorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Tellers for the Noes — Major Seely and Mr. Trevelyan.

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the second word 'the,' in page 2, line 26, stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 158; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 109.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn.SirH.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. SirJ (Manc'r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, MajEvans-(T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'donderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords., N.W.)
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N.R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. SirH.E (Wigtn
Maxwell, W.J.H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, A. B. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt HnJ Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. SirWilliam H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt EC(S. Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,VincentP.(Cavan,W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely,MajJ.E.B. (Isle of Wight)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehy, David.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur W (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Lyell.

Whereupon Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER moved, "That the Question 'That the Clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON rose to move to report Progress and gave way to the right hon. Gentleman. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman had moved something, but did not catch what it was.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER. I think I was perfectly in order in moving, and I have moved.

MR. MCKENNA: The Motion of the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly inaudible. We desire before the Question is put to know what the Motion was.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN explained that the Question had been put from the Chair.

MR. CHURCHILL. Do I understand that you accept the Motion, Sir.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, I have put the Question.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 150; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 110.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,Rt.Hn.A.J. (Manch'r.)

Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds.
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middles'x
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, South
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'donderry)
Harris, F Leverton (Tynemouth
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords., N.W.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N.R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robt. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, A. H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt. Hn J Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Balck, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andr'ws Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, V. P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David

Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald,
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth
Wills, Arthur W. (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. J. H. Whitley and Mr. Lyell.

Question put accordingly "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 117. (Division List No. 111.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin&Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords, N. W.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N. R
Legge, Col Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W J H(Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt Hn J Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt Hn. Lord (Lancs.)

Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und-Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, CaptEC(SAndrw'sBghs)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N. E)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharpe
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seeley, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Emmott and Mr. Barran.

Clause 3:—

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said that he desired to move that the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again. It was now a quarter to three and they had been sitting there and dealing with the Bill for about two hours and a-half. They had made very substantial progress, but there still remained a clause and a schedule of very considerable importance to be dealt with. They raised a question in which a large number of Members were interested, and they also raised many other matters in respect of this Bill and the Army Act. He thought the Committee ought to have an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon them. He did not think the Prime Minister had been there during the course of the earlier discussions, but he did not think anyone would deny that the discussions which they had had were of a practical character. ["Oh."] He did not know whether hon. Members who said "Oh" were present during the discussion. The Secretary of State made no statement to the effect that their discussion was not practical, and he answered their Questions more or less. After all, the Committee ought to remember that this was an important Bill which affected the whole of our Regular Army, and to a large extent, the Militia and the Volunteers, and they ought to have opportunities to discuss it. They knew that the Government wanted to get rid of the Militia and the Volunteers. [Cries of "Withdraw."] What was there to withdraw?

Mr. SKEWES-COX (Surrey, Kingston: The allegation that the Government wish to get rid of the Militia and the Volunteers. That is a most inaccurate allegation.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he would amend it to this extent that he would say that the Secretary of State for War wished to abolish the Militia and the Volunteers. ["No."] Well, the right hon. Gentleman had said so. He wished to get rid of the whole of the Militia and largely of the Volunteers. But that was beside the mark. His point was that this was an important Bill and the Opposition had not taken the advantage which they might have taken of discussing it at length. It was discussed a few years ago when the Liberals were in office, and the Government of the day, seeing that there was a desire to discuss it, gave the Opposition an opportunity of doing so. What they objected to was that the Government had not given them proper opportunities of discussing it, and he did think it would be desirable if Progress were reported. He would appeal to the Prime Minister that for the sake of the Secretary for War himself the Motion should be acceded to. That right hon. Gentleman had taken part in many heavy discussions during the week and had been in the House all that day. There had, moreover, been prolonged sittings during the week.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) congratulated the hon. Member on being in such a fine vein of humour at such an hour in the morning. The hon. Gentleman argued that, because he and his friends had sat up to please themselves on four nights in the week, they now required special relaxation to recover from their self-imposed labours. That was hardly an argument that appealed to the Government. It was said that the last Liberal Government gave greater opportunities for discussion of this Bill. They did. The opportunity lasted from midnight until eight o'clock in the morning. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear!"] Precisely, then why should hon. Members wish to adjourn now? It was the most singular reason that was ever given by an hon. Gentleman sitting on that bench for adjourning a debate when they had reached three o'clock, that when he and his friends were in office the discussion lasted till eight o'clock in the morning.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the Government which then sat on that bench did not closure as this Government had done.

Major SEELY said that was because it wished for martial law.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said it was not desirable to discuss closure, but whether closure was put on or not the late Government resisted, on the other occasion, Motions for adjournment and they thought that they gave a fitting opportunity to discuss this Bill. Why should he, after that, say that they should not discuss this Bill.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Because we are not prepared to discuss the Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said its importance nobody denied, and if it was not passed the whole constitution of the Army would *ipso facto* fall to pieces. [An Hon. Member: It would be as bad as the Government.] But there was no use in prolonging discussions over clauses which were precisely identical down to the very comma with the Bill which the House passed last year. There was nothing new in the Bill before the Committee; it was a constitutional necessity, and he hoped the House would continue to discuss it with a view of passing it into law.

*Mr. McCRAE trusted that the Prime Minister would accede to the request of his hon. friend, and said that one reason why the Bill should be postponed was that as it stood it made a very invidious distinction as regarded the Volunteers. Was the Secretary of State for War aware that the Army Act only applied to those Volunteers who were brigaded along with the Regular Army. It had been the policy of the right hon. Gentleman to bring up the *status* of the Volunteers as far as possible to that of the Army.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot discuss the Bill on the Motion to report Progress.

*Mr. McCRAE said he was not going to discuss the Bill. He was only suggesting a reason to the Prime Minister why he should accept this Motion to report Progress, because there were questions of great importance which it would not be fair to discuss at three o'clock in the morning. He put it to the Prime Minister, on behalf of those who had not had the opportunity of having two nights off in the week, if he had any human sympathy left, to agree to the Motion.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said that if the Prime Minister had been present and not absent, and had heard the debate, he did not think he would have told them that this was an Act which they ought to pass year after year without reasonable consideration. At all events, he was convinced that our soldiers in the Army and the people in the country would not consider that the Government and the right hon. Gentleman opposite were rightly safeguarding the interests of our soldiers by thrusting an important measure like this through the House in the early hours of the morning without any discussion whatever. He appealed to the Prime Minister to give them reasonable and proper facilities for the consideration of the measure. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not use his Parliamentary majority in this flagrantly unfair fashion against the interests of the Army.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was sorry the Prime Minister could not see his way to accede to the reasonable request which had been put forward. There was no programme of legislation before the House, andthe Government could not therefore use the excuse that they were hard pressed to get important Bills through. If they had that excuse he could understand their discussing this Bill till an early hour in the morning. The right hon. Gentleman had been simply dawdling all these weeks and then the Committee was compelled to sit into the early hours of the morning to pass a Bill of this sort. The Prime Minister said it was irrelevant whether this Bill was closured or not in 1893, but it was not irrelevant for this reason: the Prime Minister himself said there was a difference between discussing a Bill before twelve o'clock and discussing it after twelve.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman not to discuss the question of closure.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said it seemed to be perfectly in order for the Prime Minister to make an observation but it seemed to be out of order for him to reply to it.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: On the point of order, said he had always understood as to the closure that they were not allowed to discuss the particular merits of a particular question of closure, but they were allowed to discuss as to whether the closure was under certain circumstances carried fairly or otherwise. That distinction had been taken over and over again and he could show the Chairman half-a-dozen instances.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The action of the Chair in the application of the closure cannot be discussed.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was not discussing the conduct of the Chair. He was discussing a remark made by the Prime Minister, and he was sure the Chairman would not have one rule for the Prime Minister and another for a private Member.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the hon. Member should make that remark. An observation about the closure was made across the floor of the House and I simply answered it. I did not start it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he did not know who started it, but he thought the circumstances of the hour were sufficient to justify the Motion to report Progress. In the interest of the Prime Minister himself he thought they ought to have an adjournment. From the very close attention he had given to the business of the House that day, he thought that they ought to report Progress in his interest. Besides that, there were the poor Whips, who were short-handed at that moment. Then there was the very popular chief Whip of the Party opposite; in his interest he thought they ought to adjourn so as to enable him to get a rest. It was all very well for the Prime Minister to resist Progress, but why did he not have some feeling for this poor sufferer? The chief Whip had been there when the Prime Minister pursued the policy, which he initiated, of running away. He should also think it had been a harassing day for the Prime Minister himself, who ought to give himself the rest which he did not have the night before in consequence of a certain election. He thought also that it was only fair to his supporters that he should adjourn. It must have been a very harassing day also for them, and they showed signs of despondency and despair. He thought they should reconsider their position, but they did not seem to have given themselves any time to do that. For these and other reasons he thought they ought to adjourn the debate. The right hon. Gentleman also seemed to forget that there were people outside the House who took an interest in this matter. He seemed to forget that there was such a place as Brighton, although perhaps the Patronage Secretary had informed him that there had been an interesting discussion going on there, and that the Motion had been carried.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I do not think that is relevant to the Motion before the House, which is that I report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said it was because he wanted Progress that he was reminding the Prime Minister that the country wanted progress. There was a very important question which would have to be discussed under Clause 3. They had not been allowed to discuss Clause 2, which dealt with matters of life and death to soldiers, but on Clause 3 they had to deal with the question of billeting and it also dealt with matters of importance to officers, and the pay of officers. They had also new clauses to bring forward with a view of enabling soldiers to have proper access to this Act of Parliament which even the War Minister, with all his lucidity, could not explain to the Committee. Another important subject was the abolition of corporal punishment in the Army. His hon. friend the Member for South Donegal had three or four hours to discuss the question of flogging in the Navy; why should they not have three or four hours to discuss it in the Army? He thought they ought to have an opportunity of discussing these very important matters at a time when the House of Commons could really discuss them with energy and intelligence, and when they could be reported in the public Press. The Prime Minister did not think the country was taking an interest in the discussion of the House of Commons, but he thought he had been disillusioned within the last twenty-four hours.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) was quite sure that the Prime Minister was not aware of the fact that up to the present not a single Irish Member had been allowed to address the House. It was undesirable that the Irish Members should be asked to commence the debate at three o'clock in the morning. They had heard several eloquent speakers from Wales, and several Scottish Members had spoken. He thought Ireland was also entitled to have a voice in this matter because Irish and Scottish soldiers practically did all the fighting for England. He thought it was unfair of the Prime Minister, who had not had to listen to some of the speeches to which they had had to listen, to go home at three o'clock in the morning and impose upon the Committee the necessity of continuing the debate till eight o'clock. He happened to be a constituent of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast and he understood that when he left the War Office he would also leave the representation of West Belfast. The next clause which would come before them was a very important one—

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**: The hon. Member cannot discuss anything that is coming later on.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN said he did not propose to discuss the clause, but merely to call attention to the fact that a very important clause was about to be discussed. An hon. friend of his had raised a very important point as to the publication of an abstract of the Army Act, and this next clause was the one upon which it could be raised. In his opinion an abstract of the Act should be supplied to the barracks of Ireland and England.

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**: It would be quite out of order for the hon. Member to discuss that question.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN said he only mentioned it because an important suggestion had been made, therefore, speaking purely unofficially and on his own behalf and as the only Member for Ireland who took an interest in this question, he thought the Prime Minister should withdraw his opposition to the Motion that Progress should be reported. He thought he could show the Prime Minister where one of the clauses of the Army Act was absolutely illegal.

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**: The hon. Member is speaking to the Motion to report Progress. It is absolutely out of order for him to discuss that matter.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN said the Prime Minister was not there when the second clause was passed, and he thought he should point out to him that in the Army Act one of the clauses stated that rates should be struck by the grand jurors in Ireland, whereas as a matter of fact there were no grand jurors in Ireland.

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**: The hon. Member must not refer to the clauses of the Army Act. He must confine himself to the reasons for reporting Progress.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN said he was pointing out how much of the time of the House had been lost already by passing an Act which dealt with grand jurors in Ireland which did not exist.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 150; Noes, 113. (Division List No. 112.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, RtHn. HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hn.A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, RtHnGerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R.(Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H.F.(Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Cambpell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn.J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D.(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John

Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords N.W
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Faversh'm
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks N.R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt. Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Ward, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E. C. (S Andrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayden, John Patrick
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr Keir Hardie and Mr Arthur Henderson.

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 112; Noes, 150. (Division List No. 113.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, R Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William, J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E.C.(S.A'd'w'sBgh)
Emmott, W Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N. E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh'e)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middles'x
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campell, J. M. H. (Dublin Univ.)
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas, Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans-(T'r H'm's
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Groves, James Grimble
Gretton, John
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'rry)

Harris, F.Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,Sir James (St'ff'ds.N.W)
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard,John(Kent,Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col.W
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,Hn.H.L. W.(Mile End)
Lawson,JohnGrant (Yorks.NR
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fred'k N. S.
Long,Col.Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt.H.Walter (Bristol,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W.F.
Maxwell,Rt.H Sir H.E.(Wig'n
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan,David J.(Walthamst'w
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Mara, James
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel,Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith,RtHnJ.Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley,Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C.E. (T'nt'n
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whitley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) wished to explain a personal matter. In the last division he got into the wrong lobby. It occurred in this way——

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has made his explanation and it will appear in the Papers to-morrow in the ordinary way.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE moved an Amendment to provide that payment for the refreshments which innkeepers were bound to supply to soldiers billeted upon them should be paid for by "the officers, non-commissioned officers, or other responsible persons in charge of the detachment." He wished to clear up the question of who was the person who was liable to meet these payments to the innkeeper. If these men refused to provide a meal they were subject to all sorts of pains and penalties. They had to find such quantities of "diet" and small beer as might from time to time be fixed by His Majesty's regulations.

MR. O'MARA said he very much resented the speech which had been made by his colleague the Member for North Kilkenny, who said that no Irish Member other than himself was interested in the Army. Long before the hon. Member had come into that House he had proved that nobody took a deeper and keener interest in the Army than he did himself. Night after night after twelve o'clock he had endeavoured to improve the efficiency of the Army. He did resent that the hon. Member should think that military knowledge was confined to himself. He thought, however, that Kilkenny, with two out of its three Members taking an interest in this subject, was well represented. As he was endeavouring to explain to the Chairman, he unfortunately found himself in the wrong lobby. ["Oh."] He was not going to pursue that subject, as he was most careful to obey the rulings of the Chair, but it occurred while he was reading Clause 106, which had reference to this matter. That clause provided that if by reason of any sudden order to march, or otherwise, the officer or soldier was unable to make such payment to the innkeeper he should cause the account to be made out and sign it. If he were the innkeeper upon whom soldiers were billeted he should write off all the accounts as bad, because he should have no chance of recovering the amounts from the Secretary for War. That was a great hardship on these unfortunate innkeepers throughout the country on whom soldiers were quartered. If the suggestion of hon. Members were followed and everybody read the Army Act he hoped they would not find themselves in the same predicament as himself, viz., in the wrong lobby.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not refer to that; he must confine himself to the Amendment.

Mr. O'MARA said he would do so, and proceeded to contend that the Amendment was a most proper one. He appealed to the Secretary for War to accept the Amendment, so that the innkeeper should be paid.

***Colonel WELBY** (Taunton) said it was some years since he had been marching with troops, but the sum for the billets was always paid before they left the billets, the officer or non-commissioned officer in charge being responsible they were paid, and certifying to it. He did not think there was any difficulty about the innkeeper being paid even when he engaged other billets, but whether the price paid was sufficient was another matter. He had never heard of a case where there was any difficulty about payment for billets.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he should like to know what the British taxpayer thought of this, and explained that "diet" was an old Scotch phrase, meaning a meal. The Amendment before the Committee was one of very considerable importance, and suggested that in addition the clause might be amended by adding that the payment should be at such reasonable prices as might from time to time be fixed.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said the point was perfectly clear; the Act provided that an officer whose force required billets in accordance with the Act should before he departed pay a just demand.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE thought that the answer given by the Secretary for War was a perfectly reasonable one and said he was prepared to withdraw the Amendment. He should not have moved these particular words if he had been aware of the section which the right hon. Gentleman had quoted.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE moved to leave out the words "At prices given in the schedule of this Act," in order to insert "at reasonable prices." In the towns in which soldiers were billeted licensed victuallers were compelled to take them in, and that very often dislocated the whole of their business. They did not object to take the soldiers in, but they objected to the prices of the schedule.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We must reserve the prices until we come to the schedule.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE thought he might move to omit the prices in the schedule and to insert in this clause "at reasonable prices." They could not have a schedule which was applicable to the whole of the country, because the prices were different and the accommodation was different. That was the point taken by Mr. Hanbury in the debate in which the Chairman took so conspicuous a part, and supported Mr. Hanbury's contention. He was perfectly in order. In some parts of the country accommodation could be supplied much more cheaply than in others, and if they had a schedule applicable to the whole country it was very unfair. In some watering places where accommodation was exceedingly scarce, soldiers came during the training season, the innkeepers were bound to take them in, and were obliged to refuse ordinary visitors during the season, and obliged to take such sums as 1½d. and 4d. He thought there ought to be some scale of terms which was perfectly elastic. He had opposed licensed victuallers as much as anybody on that side of the House when he considered they were exacting unfair terms from the public, but he wanted perfect fairness for them. He asked if it was fair to compel the licensed victuallers to accept 1½d. and 4d. for the meals of a soldier. This was not the affair of the soldier at all, but it was a question whether the country should pay reasonably for the accommodation which was afforded to their servants.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 11, to leave out the words 'the prices specified in the Schedule to this Act,' and insert the words 'reasonable prices.'"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Major SEELY thought the Amendment was an exceedingly reasonable proposition, and although it was now somewhat early in the morning he thought that if they had been taking the Bill under ordinary circumstances they certainly would have raised this point. The hon. and gallant Member for Taunton was good enough to explain to them in the course of the few remarks which he made a short time before, that when he went from place to place with the Scots Greys there was not much objection to the punctuality of the payment made, but he could not be certain there was no objection to the price. From what he knew of the billeting of soldiers, he was aware that, although innkeepers had no objection whatever to billeting them as such, they did object very strongly in some places to the prices which were paid. In his opinion the prices paid were not reasonable, and probably the Committee were not aware how much it was that the keeper of a victualling house was asked to do for soldiers. The keeper of a victualling house was to receive officers or soldiers, and was required to furnish such accommodation, lodging, attendance, and food as was necessary. There was a special note stating that the officer should pay for his own food, which was inserted later in the Act. The actual prices paid might, perhaps, be more effectively discussed on the schedule, and, therefore, it was only necessary to say here that they were on an extraordinarily low scale. This scale had not been varied for thirteen years, and it included the lodging, attendance, and food of the soldier. These charges did not apply to private houses, as they did in Germany, because here private houses were specifically excepted, and the consequence was that all soldiers had to be billeted at inns. The point he wished to put before the Committee was that the system of billeting was not at all the same as that pursued in any Continental country, and that, therefore, the charges to be paid which were enumerated in the schedule were really wholly inadequate——

Mr. Secretary **Arnold-Forster** rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Major SEELY: You ought to have replied.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided; Ayes, 146; Noes, 105. (Division List No. 114.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H.F (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J.E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Harris, F Leverton (Tynemouth
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords., N. W.
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland

Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, RtHnSirH.E. (Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robt. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, A. H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, RtHnJ Parker(Lanarks)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt'n
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, CaptEC(S. Andrw's B'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, V. P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E (Waterford)
Richards, Thos. (W. Monmouth)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John C (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Committee divided; Ayes, 145; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 115.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, RtHn A.J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn GeraldW(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R.(Christch.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt-Col. H.F.(Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M. (DublinUniv
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. AilwynEdward
Fergusson, Rt HnSir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir RB (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir AugustusFrederick
Gordon, HnJ.E. (Elgin &Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, MajEvans-(T'rH'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D.(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James(StaffordsNW
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent,Favershm
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt Hn Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, HnHLW (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks NR
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. CharlesW (Evesham
Long, RtHnWalter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W.F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn SirHE(Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, RtHnJParker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col.ACE (Taunton)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H (Ashton und.Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham William (Rhondda)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Cautson, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C(SAndrw'sBghs.
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.

Gladstone, Rt Hn Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Hardie, J Keir (MerthyrTydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P (Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Richards, Thomas(WMonm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Shechy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Osmond Williams and Mr. Fuller.

Whereupon Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster moved, "That the Question 'That the clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: On a point of order, I submit that it is not fair and respectful to the House that a Minister of the Crown should mutter and mumble some Motion of which the Committee does not hear a word.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Not a word was heard.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman speak out in the English language. He had better raise his voice next time.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman moved that the Question, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill" be now put. The Question is "That the Question that Clause 3 stand part of the Bill be now put."

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 145; Noes, 100. (Division List No. 116.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour,Rt.Hn.GeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,Maj.Evans(T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq.of (L'donderry
Harris,F.Leverton (Tynemouth
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords., N.W.)
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph

Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robt. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, A. H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und-Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt EC (S.Andrw'sB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis, J.
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, V. P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Charles Hobhouse and Mr. Fuller.

Question put accordingly, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 145; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 117.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hon.A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour,Rt.HnGeraldW(Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H.F (Middl'sex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H.M.(DublinUniv.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish,V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson,SirAugustusFrederick)
Gordon,Hn. J. E.(Elgin&Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,Maj Evans-(T'rH'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,WalfordD(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,SirJames (Staffords.NW
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard,John(Kent,Faversham
Hozier,Hon.JamesHenryCecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H.L.W. (Mile End
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks,N.R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,FrederickN.S.
Long,Col. CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell,Rt.Hn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W.J.H. Dumfries'hire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn.Wm. RobertWellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith,Rt HnJ Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley,Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt. Hn SirWilliam H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley,H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William(Cork,N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt.EC(SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay,Alexander(Lanark,NE
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse,C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvons.)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, V. P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.

Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Cathcart Wason and Mr. Runciman.

MR. KEIR HARDIE moved a new clause, which read as follows:—"An abstract of the Army Act, principally of those sections referring to Judges, offences, and punishments, shall be prepared and exhibited in every recruiting station, and shall be read to each applicant for service in the Army before he is permitted to enlist." Under the Coal Mines Regulation Act an abstract of the Act and a copy of the rules in force in a colliery had to be prepared and posted up in legible characters in some conspicuous place at, or near, the mine, where they might be read by persons employed or those about to be employed. The Act also provided that a copy of this abstract and rules should be supplied to every collier working in the mine. Under the Act of 1887 it was laid down in effect that, if colliers were to be expected to obey the law, steps should be taken to let them know what the law was, and surely what was held to be necessary in the case of colliers should not be less necessary in the case of soldiers. The Army Act which they were discussing consisted of 190 clauses, and it was impossible to believe that even an experienced soldier could know a tithe of the clauses which he was expected to obey. Young men were induced to enter a sphere which was altogether new to them, and where their duties were altogether new. There was nothing to which they had been accustomed in their former state of life, and yet they were expected to obey all the provisions of this Act subject to very serious penalties. It was, for instance, laid down that, if a young soldier saw soldiers on the other side whom he thought he could take prisoners, and in his zeal rushed out to secure these men without having first obtained permission from his superior officer, he by that very act was rendering himself liable to penal servitude. He asked that these things should be put in such handy form that the soldier should know what was expected of him. There were other things in this Act with which a person seeking enlistment should be made acquainted. There were all sorts of restrictions and limitations imposed upon the soldier. He saw the glowing advertisements posted outside the post offices, churches and prisons, and read the glowing accounts of deeds of heroism on the field of battle, but he was not made acquainted with the regulations and conditions under which he was expected to serve when he enlisted. Even if it were desirable to parade the glories of the Army in order to induce a man to enlist, the other side also should be revealed to him, so that the man might not enlist in ignorance of what he was doing. One reason why men of decent stamina were refusing to enter the Army at all was because they heard that the conditions of service were unduly hard and severe. These facts got spread abroad and made men chary about enlisting. Thousands were of his opinion that if good men could be obtained they would make up for the weaklings. The more honour and honesty there was in regard to enlisting in the Army the better would be the class of men likely to be drawn into it.

*MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) seconded, and said he thought they were fully justified in pressing this new clause. They had appealed to the Secretary of State for War that something in the nature of an abstract should be published for the benefit of the soldier. Those appeals, however, were evidently not considered and therefore they were compelled to take the only course open to them, and that was to bring forward a new clause and propose that it be added to the Bill. This was no new principle they were asking the Committee to accept. The mover of the Resolution had pointed to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, which provided for an abstract so far as miners were concerned. There was a much more recent example to be found in the Truck Act of 1898, passed by a Conservative Government. Under that Act the employer was to summarise the main features and post them in a place so that those employed should know the conditions which would apply to them. One hon. Member had suggested that the case of the soldier and of the ordinary workman were entirely different, but he failed to see where the difference existed. Surely if it were right for Governments to enforce conditions upon employers it must also be right that Governments, who were employers, should be prepared to accept similar conditions for the servants they employed. It was, moreover, right that the Committee should stand up for the soldier. They had had a general desire expressed since the publication of the Report of an inquiry into the condition of the Army, for a higher degree of efficiency, and efficiency could not be built up on ignorance. If they were going to withhold from the soldier, or from the individual who desired to enlist, the actual conditions under which his services should take place, surely it was not tending to the promotion of a higher state of efficiency. He ventured to suggest that the more knowledge they could give to the individual unit in the various sections of the Army the better it would be. We might have a smaller Army as the result, but it would be better to have a smaller but informed Army, and that the men should enter the service fully informed as to the conditions under which they were to serve.

A New Clause (Exhibition of abstract in recruiting stations),—(*Mr. Keir Hardie*),—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he could not accept the clause as he thought it was quite unnecessary. He did not see why such a provision was more necessary for the Army than it was for the Navy. No exception was taken on the part of the men in regard to their present state of information, and it had not been contended that what was called the "Small Book" which they were entitled to apply for and possess and which most men did possess, was insufficient. The sections of the Army Act which deal with discipline were read out constantly to the troops, and every soldier could see the Act itself and what was known as the summary of the Act contained in the "Small Book."

Mr. KEIR HARDIE: Are those read out also to the recruits joining?

Mr. J. A. PEASE said that some of them were ignorant of what the contents of this "Small Book" might be, but what they desired was that both those who proposed to become recruits as well as those who joined the Army should really understand what the penalties were to which they subjected themselves when they joined the Army, and what the offences were in respect of which those penalties were imposed. Many hon. Members thought that the State should be a model employer, and the House had compelled employers to place certain rules before their workmen It was now proposed that they should lay down rules very similar for themselves to those they had laid down for others. Was, he asked, the "Small Book" a fair abstract of the 190 clauses of the Army Act?

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said it was indeed surprising that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War who expressed a most extreme anxiety for the reorganisation and reform of the Army in order to make it more efficient for the defence of the Empire, should have a moment's hesitation in conceding what had been asked for in the new clause proposed. It was absolutely reasonable that those who were asked to join the Army should be informed before they were recruited what were the terms and conditions, the regulation, and discipline to which they were to be subjected. He represented a district of Yorkshire from which came a very large number of recruits during the war, and a very large number of Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers also came from there and offered to go to South Africa to fight the battles of their country. But their experience was that the discipline of the Army was needlessly harsh in many respects, and the system sent back nine out of ten of these men absolutely disgusted with the Army and military operations, and when the time came again when this country needed every son to fight her battles they would not get the same response as on the last occasion. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to defend the British Empire he would remove unjust and senseless restrictions and the petty conditions which were contained in the Army Act. It was high time that the Army Act was reconsidered by the House to a much fuller degree than it had been in late years. For the Prime Minister to tell them that the Army Act had been passed year after year was no excuse for his proceeding to endeavour not to allow them a fair opportunity of discussing it. The Secretary for War owed it to the Committee that he should not meet proposals of this sort in a carping spirit, but that he should welcome them and remove everything which was an impediment to the best men entering the Army. He regretted deeply the manifestation of this want of sympathy both on the part of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War.

Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 141; Noes, 96. (Division List No. 118.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brassey-Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, South
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r. H'mlets
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. Alford D (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir J (Staffords. N. W.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigtn
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George

Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, A. H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt. HnJ. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland-
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayden, John Patrick
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, V. P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. Keir Hardie.

Question put accordingly, "That the clause be read a second time."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 94: Noes, 141. (Division List No. 119.)

AYES.

Abraham William (Cork N.E.
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark NE
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayden, John Patrick
Higham, John Sharpe
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.

Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Arthur Henderson.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, Lt-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick)
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, South
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r H'ml'ts
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords, N. W
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt. Hn Sir H E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he rose to move to report Progress, and submitted that the time had arrived when the Prime Minister should allow them to do so. They had made considerable progress and there was Progress to report. They had practically got through the whole of the Bill and had come to deal with new clauses. There were four or five of the new clauses to be proposed which were very important. [" Oh."] Did hon. Members mean to suggest that the question of corporal punishment in the Army was not an important question.

Several HON. MEMBERS: It has been repealed.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: It has not. Whoever told you that told you wrong.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member move anything?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he was moving to report Progress on the Bill, and he appealed to the Prime Minister to allow them to report Progress as the measure must necessarily take some time. There was a very important Bill coming on at noon. Could it be that the object of the Government was not to forward their own business, but to delay other business? Did they want the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sisters Bill not to come on?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said the Motion was not one that he could be expected to accede to. He was not aware of any occasion on which the Army Bill, upon which they were now engaged, introduced without changes to the House had taken more time than this Bill had taken. There was nothing in the circumstances this year which should make them depart from their ordinary course. He hoped the hon. Member would allow them to continue the discussion.

Mr. McKENNA said he understood that it was not necessary that the Act should be passed until the 30th of April. They had four days next week and three the week after before the holidays began. Any night on Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday next week would be fully ample time to discuss the matter in Committee; and as it was quite certain that the Government did not mean to accept any Amendment it meant that once that stage of the Bill was over, the only remaining stage would be the Third Reading. That would mean under the system of closure, which apparently was regularly to be applied, half an hour on Monday or Tuesday next. Under those circumstances why should not the Prime Minister allow them to report Progress now at a reasonable hour. If he did not, what was the alternative? This Bill required an enormous amount of amendment. The Prime Minister had to set the brute force of his majority against the ingenuity on the Opposition side. The brute force was that of a weakened majority. Once before the right hon. Gentleman attempted this plan, but he failed to carry it out. The Opposition could protract the proceedings till twelve that day, or till midnight. [Cries of "Go on."] He very well remembered last session that cries of "Go on; go on" were raised at five or six o'clock in the morning, but between eleven and twelve and one and two there was abject silence on those benches. Hon. Members opposite ought to recognise, if they did not, that there was a quite sufficient body of Gentlemen on that side of the House who were ready to sit as long as they were. They ought to recognise that every single clause of this Army Act was the subject of Amendment by new clauses inserted in the Army (Annual) Bill, and the closure had to come into operation on each new clause under the present system. It was therefore possible for them to have at least 190 new clauses. Would it not be infinitely better for the right hon. Gentleman to allow his dejected followers to go home quietly to bed, and he would in the long run get his Bill through with far less expenditure of labour than if he persisted in going on now. The next Motion of Progress might be moved at ten o'clock, but the three or four hours which intervened had better be spent in bed.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that this was the second evening this week that this Bill had been put down for discussion. It was put down on an earlier evening as the second order, and then the House come down to discuss it at a reasonable length, thinking that they should have another opportunity. But for some mysterious reason there was nobody on that bench to move the Committee stage of the Bill on Tuesday evening last, and the result was that the discussion instead of taking two evenings had been confined to one evening. They on that side, however, were not responsible for the action of the Government on Tuesday last. They regretted their absence and would have been perfectly prepared to discuss this Bill then. They were, however, driven to discuss this Bill in one evening when it ought to have taken two. Ever since they had been discussing these matters there had been great consultations between the Financial Secretary and the Attorney-General in order, he had no doubt, to arrive at a fuller comprehension of this Act than the Financial Secretary had before this discussion took place. They were not, however, only going to discuss classes with which the Attorney-General was familiar, but new clauses with which he was unacquainted. He thought it was better that they should adjourn till Monday next, when the two hon. Gentlemen could come to an agreement on the point.

Mr. A. J. Balfour rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 141; Noes, 96. (Division List No. 120.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r.
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, Lieut.-Col HF (Middle'x
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Charles Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'donderry)
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords N W
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks N. R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.

Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, RtHn J. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, CaptE.C(SAndrw'sB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharpe
Johnson, John
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (Isle of Wight)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. M'Kenna and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 96; Noes, 141. (Division List, No. 121.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, CaptE.C(SAndrw'sB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry

MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Lewis and Mr. Cathcart Wason.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, RtHon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, RtHn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, R. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs).
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath Sir James (Staffords. NW
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieutenant-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks N. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt Hn J Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, W. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN asked the hon. Member for Oswestry to explain his new clause which provided that notwithstanding anything in the Act it should not be lawful to inflict corporal punishment upon soldiers for insubordination and other offences. How did he bring that in as a new clause, seeing that the Act had already been altered and flogging abolished?

*Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry) said that Section 133 of the Army Act proved that the new clause was in order. Section 133 provided that power should be vested in the Secretary of State, and in India in the Governor-General, from time to time to make, alter, and repeal rules for the management of military prisons and the maintenance of discipline in them and for the punishment of prisoners by the infliction of twenty-five lashes for offences committed by such prisoners. That was to say, that there was the power of inflicting twenty-five lashes in military prisons for offences of military insubordination or otherwise, and he thought it was an exceedingly shocking state of things. They had believed that some time ago all corporal punishment had been abolished from the Army, and he thought it was something rather contrary to our present degree of civilisation to find that simply for offences in discipline in prisons there was still power to inflict such an extreme penalty as twenty-five lashes under the support and authority of the Secretary of State. He did not know whether this was likely to commend itself to the House, and he thought there ought to be some reconsideration of this matter. He thought this was an instance of savagery. He did not know whether this provision was acted upon, but what had struck him about the Act was that it wanted a thorough overhauling, and if the result of that night's debate was to get these twenty-five lashes done away with something would have resulted from it. He begged to move.

Mr. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) seconded the new clause and said this was a subject in which he felt very deeply interested. They looked with great interest each year to the Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Military Prisons, and he thought they had ground to complain that they did not receive it much earlier. The latest Report they now had in their hands was that for 1903. He had turned to that, and saw that on seven different occasions in our home prisons, excluding those in Egypt and India, corporal punishment with the, cat-o'-nine tails was inflicted, although the inspector did not give any details as to the number of lashes.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member say that this is in military prisons?

Mr. TOMKINSON said he was alluding to military prisons. A great improvement had taken place, and that great improvement was due to the very earnest lady who wrote a very thrilling book called "Scarlet and Steel." It was said to be sensational and exaggerated, but he had looked into the matter and had ascertained the sources of her information, and found it was founded on fact and on truth. What was the state of the case? The soldier now was supposed to be let off absolutely from the disgraceful and degrading punishment of flogging. He was sent to a military prison only for a military offence, and he continued a soldier. If he committed a civil crime he was tried before a civil Court and went to a civil prison, and that did not come under their cognisance. As he had said, a soldier sent for a military offence to a military prison was still a soldier and ought not to be subjected to this disgraceful and odious punishment of flogging which was now inflicted upon him. He contended strongly that the supposed necessity for flogging in military prisons was only a proof of the incompetence of the authorities, namely, of the governors and warders, to keep order there. Previously to recent reforms there were in this country two classes of military prisons, one at the head of which were officers who were gentlemen, and at the head of the other were retired sergeant-majors or retired police officers. In these different prisons were practically the same number of prisoners, and yet there were practically twice as many corporal punishments inflicted in the prisons presided over by the ex-sergeant-majors or the police officers as there were in the prisons presided over by the officers and gentlemen. That proved that one class of men had thought it necessary to inflict this sort of punishment twice as often as had the other class. Corporal punishment had been done away with in Irish prisons and had not been inflicted for years, and yet in our military prisons it had been inflicted on several occasions, although the Irish authorities had found themselves able to dispense with it, and to keep perfect order without it. He thought that the soldier in the British Army ought to be absolutely free from any liability to such a punishment, whether free or detained in a military prison. It was a cruel and brutalising punishment—the punishment of a slave.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, of a Chinese slave.

Mr. TOMKINSON said it was torture. People asked what twenty-five lashes meant. The lash had nine tails, and was a method of inflicting the severest punishment without actually endangering life.

New Clause (Prohibition of corporal punishment,)—(*Mr. Bright*,)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) thought the hon. Member for Oswestry had chosen an unfortunate method of drawing attention to this subject, because he had drawn up a new clause by which it was suggested that the practice of flogging continued in the Army. He was sure the hon. Member did not intend to suggest that, but that undoubtedly was the suggestion made by his clause. In his speech, however, he pointed out that he was referring to military prisons.

*Mr. BRIGHT: I am willing to alter the clause so as to make it refer to military prisons only.

Mr. Tomkinson.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT thought the Committee quite understood what the hon. Member desired. It was quite true that in military prisons they retained this power for enforcing discipline, which was found to be necessary for the protection of warders placed over civil prisoners. It was not for him to say whether it was necessary or not. He objected to this form of punishment as much as any hon. Members could, but the proper method of raising this very important question was not upon a side issue on the Army Annual Bill, but as a direct issue upon the larger question of whether it was or was not necessary to retain the power in prisons generally, on the Civil Service Estimates. He was quite sure that the Secretary of State for War would follow the example of abolishing this punishment if it were set by the civil authorities.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said it was not their fault that they were raising the question now. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted the enormous importance of it, and his Government had forced on the discussion of this question till twenty minutes past six in the morning. There were a large number of military offences under the Act which were punishable by flogging. Taking the fourth clause, there were in that seven classes of offences, and any prisoner who was subject to military law and who committed one of those offences would be liable to suffer death or any such punishment as was mentioned in the Act, and flogging was mentioned in the Act.

*Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: No, the hon. Member is mistaken.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS said the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oswestry had read the clause in which that punishment was laid down. In the next clause there were six different classes of offences for which the offender was liable to suffer penal servitude or such other punishment as was mentioned in the Act. In other clauses there were other offences for which the offender was liable on conviction to suffer death or such other punishment as was mentioned in the Act. He thought that his hon. friend had made out a case for the new clause. They had had an admission from the Government that the question was of a most important character, and they had had a statement that flogging did not now prevail. But they found that it did now prevail, and now was the time for the House of Commons to discuss and vote upon the subject.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said that if the hon. Gentleman would look at the Army Act he would see that he was mistaken in supposing that flogging in the Army for any of the offences he referred to existed as a punishment. Flogging in the Army had been abolished, but a soldier was subject in civil prisons to the same punishment as other persons.

AN HON. MEMBER: But his offence is a military one.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said precisely so, but if it was found necessary in civil prisons to have recourse to flogging, for what reason could the hon. Member suggest that it was not suitable in military prisons? Civil and military prisoners were on the same footing. If the whole subject was to be considered, he very much doubted if it would be possible to secure safety for the warders if flogging was abolished. He confessed that he had serious doubts upon the subject, and it would be obviously absurd to make this distinction now between civil and military prisons, and that was the only question with which the Committee was concerned.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Is it not abolished in Ireland?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I am not aware of that.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON said the Parliamentary Secretary to the War Office had told them that this was not a suitable opportunity on which to raise this most important question, but he might point out to the hon. Gentleman that when the opportunity arose on the Vote for Prisons they were closured, and, therefore, His Majesty's Government had not on that occasion given them an opportunity to raise it. His Majesty's Government had led the country to believe, and the country did believe, that flogging had been abolished absolutely and utterly in the British Army. [Cries of "So it has been."] It had not, because they now found that it prevailed in military prisons. Therefore, as the occupants of military prisons were soldiers, flogging was not abolished in connection with the Army. He would challenge any Member on the Government side of the House who voted against this new clause to go down to his constituents and see if he could get a vote of confidence; which showed that flogging in any shape or form, whether it was inside or outside military prisons, should not be permitted. It was a degrading form of punishment which ought to be abolished for ever. If nothing else had been done by their sitting up all night than the raising of this question of common humanity and justice to our soldiers the night would have been well spent. They sought to have in the Army men of good character, morale, and physique, but when a man possessing those qualities knew that when he entered the Army, by some mischance, he was liable to be sent to a military prison and flogged there, he would not enter the Army. Flogging was not popular in connection with the British Army, and it was generally believed to have been abolished for ever. The question had been raised of flogging in civil prisons, but they on that side objected to that as much as to flogging in military prisons. They could not discuss civil prisons that evening, but they were entitled to say that they abhorred the practice and that flogging was calculated to discourage the best class of men from entering the Army and was responsible largely for the ineffective condition of the Army.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the Financial Secretary to the War Office, although he admitted the importance of this matter, rather evaded the point of his right hon. friend's clause. He said that there was flogging in civil prisons, and that the Government were only applying the same rule to military prisons, but the Financial Secretary had overlooked this fact, that the civil prisons received prisoners who had done something which involved a moral taint. Many of the offences under the Army Act, however, for which a soldier would be sent to a military prison were mere acts of indiscretion.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: It has not been suggested that they are flogged for such offences as that.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that there again the hon. Gentleman had overlooked the difference between the two classes of prisoners. A man might be imprisoned in a military prison not because he was guilty of any moral turpitude, but simply on account of an indiscretion. They had 24,000 cases of imprisonment in a year in the Army, and these were not cases of crime. They were not offences in the sense in which they were in civil prisons. What happened? The moment the prisoners were in the military prisons they were liable to be flogged by the order of a couple of subalterns sitting as a Court-martial. [Cries of "No, no!"] He said that two subalterns, sitting as a Court-martial, at the present time could order a flogging. [Several HON. MEMBERS: The hon. Member is quite wrong.] His authority was obtained from those who had investigated the matter for themselves.

LIEUTENANT MORRISON (Wiltshire, Wilton) pointed out that two subalterns could not constitute a Court-martial as the law required three subalterns to constitute one.

MR. J. A. PEASE said he thought what the hon. Member for Carnarvon had said was rather due to something that he had told him a few moments ago. He thought it was only fair that if the hon. Gentleman had made a mistake on his direction he, at any rate, should take the responsibility. In 1897 he went very fully into this matter. He got a gentleman at the Bar to go into all the statutes under which prisoners could be flogged in prison for various offences. He had to go through a large number of cases, and in one of those cases he distinctly remembered that two subalterns were responsible for the flogging of one of these prisoners in a military prison. He was quite sure of the fact.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE hoped the hon. Member was satisfied now. [Cries of "No."] All he could say was that he was prepared to accept the authority of his hon. friend. Supposing they had 24,000 military offences in the course of a year for which offenders were imprisoned. In all those cases they could be flogged, and he did not think it was fair to treat members of the Army in the same way as they treated criminals. Did the hon. Member think it was fair and calculated to raise the character of the Army, that the soldier, for a breach of discipline, should be liable to the same class of punishment as the burglar or housebreaker in Wandsworth Gaol.

LIEUTENANT MORRISON said that as he was challenged by the hon. Member, he might say that the discussion that night was not calculated to clear the matter up. What he had wanted was the hon. Gentleman's authority for his statement.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he had asked the hon. Member a specific Question and one which really went to the root of the matter. That Question was whether the hon. Member considered it right that a soldier who was in prison for a small breach of discipline should be treated in the same way as a prisoner in Wandsworth Gaol, who was there for house-breaking or stealing, and the hon. Gentleman very discreetly refrained from answering his Question. The defence of the War Office was that because this was done with the criminal and civil prisoners the same treatment ought to be meted out to the soldiers in military prisons. But what was the use of abolishing flogging in the Army when, by the simple excuse of putting a man in prison for drunkenness—and that was what very often happened—he could be flogged for a military offence. That was the Answer which was given by the Financial Secretary.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that what he wished to convey was that they held that what was necessary for the protection of civil warders in the one case, was necessary for the protection of soldier warders in the other case.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he quite understood that the hon. Gentleman's proposition was that the soldier was on the same level as the criminal. [Cries of "No."] But that was the proposition, and, according to the hon. Gentleman, he was to be treated on the same level as a criminal, and yet the hon. Gentleman was one of those who ranted more than anyone else against anyone who was said to attack our soldiers in the South African War. Now, however, the hon. Gentleman was engaged in attempting to rush through a Bill at seven o'clock in the morning in which he placed the soldier on the same level as the criminal. The First Lord of the Treasury had put them on the same level as the Chinese coolie, but the hon. Gentleman had gone further and put them on the same level as the criminal. Gentlemen on the other side said that they had abolished corporal punishment in the Army, but now they had to admit its existence. [Cries of "No."] They would deny anything. Their only answer was the closure. Here they had in this Act a provision for twenty-five lashes being given, applying to every man in a military prison for offences not of a civil character but of a military character. He was glad to have extracted from the hon. Member that admission.

*Colonel WELBY wished to explain how totally wrong the hon. Member was as to the treatment of men in military prisons. No Court-martial in peace time could inflict the punishment of flogging, and the only way in which a soldier could suffer flogging in prison was for an offence against prison discipline. And then this punishment was only given in cases where there had been personal violence towards the warders. He had only known one case of its being inflicted, and, as far as he could recollect, in that case the punishment was awarded by the Garrison Board of Visitors. He had been a member of that board, and, after they had awarded that punishment, it had to be confirmed by the general officer commanding, and one of the board had to see it carried out. He was the officer who was detailed to be present, and all he could say was that, although he did not wish to see the man flogged, the only man who seemed to be suffering from it was the doctor, whose nerves gave way. The punishment was so light that the man himself suffered so little that he laughed. Then, again, there was a difference between the lash used in prisons and that used in the old days when there was flogging in the Army. The lash in the old days had not only nine lashes but nine knots on every lash. The "cat" which was used now had nine lashes, but there was only one knot on each lash, while the handle, which used to be springy, was now stiff, making the strokes far less severe. He thought it was very wrong for the hon. Member for Carnarvon to try and make out to the world that soldiers were treated in the same way as burglars. He said it was not true.

Mr. McKENNA said that his hon. friend was perfectly justified in every word which he had just uttered. The defence put forward by the Financial Secretary was that corporal punishment was never inflicted upon soldiers except upon exactly the same terms as it was inflicted upon civilians, and his argument was that if they objected to corporal punishment they should raise the question on the Vote for Civil Prisons. But the cases were not parallel, for the law which governed civil prisons was not the same as the law which governed military prisons. Military prisons were subject to the Prisons Act of 1877, and the Act which governed civil prisons was the Prison Act of 1898. Until the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary could prove that military prisons were governed under the Act of 1898 he could not prove that the punishment was inflicted upon soldiers upon the same terms as civilians.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 89; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 122.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork. N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John

Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,RtHn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely,Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Bright and Mr. Tomkinson.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J (Manch'r
Balfour,Rt.Hn.Gerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles,Lt-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon.Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson,SirAugustus Frederick
Gordon,Hn.J.E (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,MajEvans (T'rH'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green,Walford D.(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'donderry
Harris,F.Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,SirJames(Staffords.NW
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jn. (Kent,Faversham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks.NR
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN.S.
Long, Col.CharlesW.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Bristol,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon.W.F.
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H.(Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan,DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray (Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Skewes-Cox, Thomas

Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, John Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und-Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MAJOR SEELY said it appeared that military prisoners were not treated the same as civil prisoners.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do I understand that the hon. Member wants to alter the Civil Prisons Act? Of course he cannot do that.

MAJOR SEELY said he wished to propose a new clause as follows—

"On and after the passing of this Act the Prisons Act of 1898 shall be substituted for the Prisons Acts of 1865 and 1877 under Section 133, Sub-section 2, of the Army Act."

The effect of that would be that for the first time military prisoners would, in point of fact, be treated in the same way as civil prisoners. At present they were not so treated, because he thought the Committee would realise that their prison procedure was gradually getting less and less severe, so that the present Act of 1898 was less severe than the previous Act of 1877, and still less severe than the Act of 1865. Therefore they had discovered that military prisoners had a real and genuine grievance, inasmuch as they were liable to be punished under the Acts of 1877 and 1865 while civil prisoners were punished under the Act of 1898. In the Army, however, a man might find himself in prison for absurdly small offences. Not only might he find himself in prison for overloading a chartered vehicle, but he might find himself in prison because he forgot to pay the driver of the cab which he had hired. Then, having got into prison for a trivial offence for which a civilian would not get into prison at all, if he became obstreperous he did not find himself punishable under the less severe Act of 1898, but under the Acts of 1865 and 1877.

New Clause (Prisons Act, 1898)—(*Major Seely*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he certainly did not think it would be wise to read this clause a second time. It was quite clear that the hon. Member was dealing with this matter a good deal in the dark. If he would look at the Act of 1898 he would find that the Secretary of State could make rules as to the manner in which corporal punishment should be inflicted on civil prisoners. He did not wish to dogmatise, but he believed that it would be found that offences for which military prisoners were exposed to corporal punishment were substantially the same as those for which civil prisoners were exposed to that punishment. The acts were aggravated breaches of prison discipline, and in by far the vast majority of cases they were assaults, mostly of an aggravated character, upon warders. The Secretary of State for War authorised him to say that he would have the whole matter looked into with a desire to assimilate the system under which corporal punishment was administered in civil and military prisons, if they were not assimilated at present. If they were found to be dissimilar, steps would be taken to assimilate them.

MR. MCKENNA thought they had reached a point at which the Government might reconsider their determination not to close these proceedings. At a quarter to seven o'clock the Financial Secretary to the War Office assured them, in the most positive manner, that the position of the two classes of prisoners, military and civil, was identical, and at ten minutes past seven the Attorney-General got up, and, with much more prudence, said that he believed that there was substantial similarity between the two.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I never used the word "identical."

MR. MCKENNA asked how the hon. Gentleman could dare say that when he had cheered a passage which he had read and which seemed to imply identity. Of course he meant it. This came of sitting so late in the morning. The hon. Gentleman, who in ordinary cases was the soul of honour, was seduced at ten minutes past seven into using language which was almost, if not quite, the language of prevarication, [Cries of "Oh" and "Withdraw."]

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is not Parliamentary language, and must be withdrawn.

MR. McKENNA: Well, I withdraw it. I attribute my use of it to the time—ten minutes past seven. The hon. Member proceeded to say that he hoped that the Attorney-General and the Secretary of State for War would recognise that this was one of the questions which might fairly be raised on the Army Act. He should certainly support the new clause of his hon. friend.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE thought that the debate which had taken place on this Amendment was a complete justification for what had happened before. It was said that prisoners in military prisons were treated in exactly the same way as prisoners in civil prisons. Now, however, it turned out that they were treated under a much more severe set of Acts of Parliament. He appealed to the Government to accept the clause, and he ventured to say it would facilitate the progress of the measure very considerably at this stage if they would make this concession. If, however, they did not think the form of words in which it had been drawn were quite adapted to the occasion, would they undertake to deal with the matter. The application of the Act of 1898 to military prisons was only prevented by a technicality, and if the Government agreed to the principle of the extension of the Act of 1898 to military prisons, would they agree to bring up a clause on Report. [MR. CALDWELL: There will be no Report.] Well, if there was not a Report stage, the Government could move to recommit the Bill on this particular, and he thought that his hon. friends and himself could undertake that if the Bill were recommitted it would not be made the opportunity for discussion. Of course it would be very much better if they would now accept the form of words; and as they had already in principle accepted it, why should it not be incorporated with the Act. It would facilitate matters, however, if they would introduce the words now.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he thought the hon. Member would find it was unnecessary to make this alteration, and was sure he would be satisfied with what he had already stated. If the hon. Member would look at the Manual of Military Law, he would find that under Section 133, which gave power to make rules with regard to corporal punishment in military prisons, there was a note which he thought completely bore out what he said a few minutes before. The Prisons Act of 1898 restricted the offences punishable by corporal punishment first to mutiny and incitement to mutiny, and secondly to gross personal violence to an officer or servant. Paragraph 152 of the rules for military prisons restricted corporal punishment in prison to the same offences. The Act of 1898 provided that corporal punishment should only be inflicted upon the order of three visitors after inquiry upon oath, and after approval by the general or other officer commanding the district. He hoped the hon. Member would be satisfied with that explanation.

MAJOR SEELY did not think the considerations urged by the Attorney-General afforded a sufficient ground for not accepting this Amendment, but on the other hand afforded a reason for accepting it. He thought he was correct in saying that the note which the Attorney-General had read was not made under the binding force of law.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: No, it states what the effect of the rules is.

MAJOR SEELY said it might state the effect of the rules, but how was it to be interpreted. If he accepted his Amendment the hon. and learned Gentleman would be in a better position than he would be by being dependent upon the officer commanding or upon the note. It would be better to put the provisions of the Act of 1898 in at once, and why should they not do it?

Sir ROBERT FINLAY said that the power was given to the proper authorities to make rules for military prisons, and on that form of rules they prescribed the same form of punishment for military prisoners as was prescribed for civil prisoners under Act of 1898. Surely the hon. Member had got what he wanted by that. What was the use of pressing for something so anomalous as that rules should be made by the Home Secretary for military prisons.

Major SEELY said that if he was right the punishment could be inflicted in pursuance of the Prisons Acts of 1865 and 1877. It was not that they were asking the Home Office to lay down regulations for military prisons, but they wanted to substitute the Prisons Act of 1898 for the other Acts. He thought it would be a great deal better to have the provision set out in the Act instead of its being set out in a foot-note.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE could not help thinking that the Government were unnecessarily stubborn. They accepted a clause in principle, but they seemed to say that they could deal with the matter by general regulations. The same remark would apply to the Act of 1898.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY: But this Amendment would put military prisons under the Home Secretary.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, with every respect for the Attorney-General, thought that he was making a pedantic objection. It was not past the ingenuity of the hon. and learned Gentleman to frame words. ["Oh" and "Withdraw."] If the Attorney-General thought he ought to withdraw he would, but he did not think he had been offensive.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY: I thought I was treating the Committee fairly.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that, taking the Act of 1865 alone, they had a dozen offences for which a man could be flogged, including that of profane language.

Sir ROBERT FINLAY said a soldier could not be flogged for using profane language under that Act, and there was no power to inflict the punishment in the dozen cases mentioned.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that nobody said it did, but why, he asked, should not the soldier have the same protection as the criminal. The Financial Secretary to the War Office thought they were being treated on level terms with the criminal. All they asked was that they should have equal rights with a burglar and equal statutory *status* with a housebreaker when he got into prison. They asked that he should be given this not as a privilege but as a right, and it ought to be granted not on the grace of the Secretary of State, but by Act of Parliament. Once he was in prison the soldier ought not to be put on the same footing as an ordinary criminal. The Government would save time by assenting, and they appeared to be resisting simply from stupid stubbornness. They seemed determined to go on blundering.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS said that if the Government would make the concession which was asked for, probably the Bill would then pass with very little trouble.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) thought there was a good deal to be said in regard to the proposal of his hon. friend. If the Attorney-General put this proposal on Monday in the form of a new clause the matter might be disposed of in three-quarters of an hour. The matter could be put right by putting the soldier on the same basis as any other part of the population.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he did not think it was necessary to amend the law, but he would consider if anything could be done in a subsequent year. If he found that there was any difference between the two sets of prisoners he should be prepared to amend, but if, however, he found that there was no difference between the two sets he should not be prepared to amend.

Mr. McKENNA said a soldier was often sent to prison for not obeying his captain, and also because he was found guilty of repeated irreverence at chapel. He had committed offences in regard to which, under the Act of 1865, there was no statutory protection against flogging. In this class of cases the soldier should have the same statutory protection as the criminal and should not depend upon mere rules and regulations for his security from excessive punishment. They asked that the soldier should have the same statutory protection given him which under the Act of 1898 had been given to the burglar.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 87; Noes, 138. (Division List No. 123.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt. EC (S. Andrw's Bghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Joseph Walton and Major Seely.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man'cr
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, Sir James (Staffords NW
Helder, Augustus
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)

Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks. NR
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell,RtHn SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H(Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan,DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,RtHn J.Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon.Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und Lyne)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Mr. McKENNA said he had handed in a new clause which, perhaps, the Secretary of State for War would be able to accept. It came in after Clause 2 and was to the effect that the persons subject to military law as soldiers should include all non-commissioned officers and men raised beyond the limits of the United Kingdom and India while serving under an officer of the Militia.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the point raised by the hon. Member was already met by the Act. The question of men going on expeditions was dealt with by Clause 9, Sub-section 6, which said that all persons engaged on active service were included under the Act, and were subject to military law.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

*Mr. McCRAE moved a new clause providing that Volunteers who went into camp without being brigaded with Regular Forces should be subject to military law. He thought that this provision must have been omitted from the Army Act which, apparently, did not take into consideration the changed circumstances which now existed in regard to Volunteers. Before the Volunteers were brigaded with the Regular Forces this Army Act did not apply to them, but now that they were so brigaded they came under the Army Act. But, if they went into camp alone, then that Act did not apply to them. He thought that it would be desirable that they should not make any distinction between the Army and the Volunteers, and they certainly should not make any distinction between Volunteers and Volunteers. Commanding officers of Volunteers who went into camp would, if this clause were agreed to, feel their hands strengthened. Troops very often were under the impression that they were under the Army Act, and, of course, commanding officers did not take steps to enlighten them. But he did not think that position ought to continue, and, therefore, he hoped that the Secretary of State for War would agree to his clause. He had himself seen instances where very peculiar questions had arisen as to regiments which were in camp regimentally, and he did think that the commanding officers of regiments which had to go into camp without being brigaded should be put into the same position as those in camp brigaded with the Regular Force.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he had some sympathy with the view of the hon. Member, but before any such Amendment was passed it would be necessary to give notice to the Volunteers. He thought it would be unwise without giving special notice to introduce this fresh provision.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the Amendment touched an existing grievance of commanding officers. He knew of a case where there was considerable question in a Volunteer camp which arose owing to the presence of one or two men of the Regular Forces or of the Militia. It was impossible to take any steps to restore the men to a state of discipline. When the Secretary of State for War made such a statement as he had just done it was not recorded in the Journals of the House, and when a new Secretary of State for War succeeded he looked to the Journals of the House and finding no such statement said quite fairly that he saw no record of the promise having been given, and that the whole matter was quite new to him, and so the question fell through. What they wanted was that some record should be left so that the question should be dealt with at an early date, and that a matter to which they attached so much importance should not be buried in the unfathomable recesses of *Hansard*.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) moved a new clause with a view of amending Section 4 of the Act of 1881. It was to the effect that every person accused of an offence under the Army Act shall be entitled to demand to be tried by Court-martial. There had been many cases of injustice in which men would have liked to have been tried by Court-martial, but were disgraced for life without a trial. The section of the Army Act of 1881 contained seven offences which he need not take up the time of the House by reading. They were military offences, but the men had not the option of demanding a Court-martial, and they were at the mercy of some one above them in that respect.

New Clause (Amendments of Section 4 of Army Act, 1881)—(*Mr. Higham*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER referred to an Answer that he gave to a Question two or three days before, and said the hon. Member was under a misapprehension. Every private soldier had a right to a Court-martial where he was punished by deprivation of pay, but the right did not extend to an officer. It was not possible that the War Office should give up the power they had of dispensing with the services of an officer without his conduct being brought before a Court-martial. He thought Court-martial was a very desirable method of ascertaining whether an offence had been committed, but sometimes in the interests of the officer concerned and of the Army the other course was adopted, and he did not think it right to dispense with the power to take it.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE inquired whether there was not a power with every officer of the Navy to demand a Court-martial. Was he right in supposing that every officer of the Navy if he ran his ship ashore, or if he committed a breach of discipline, or of the rules, could demand a Court-martial? What had been the result of that practice in the Navy?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said there was some confusion about this question. He thought the hon. Member was confusing the case of the accidents to vessels which were followed by a Court-martial with supposed personal offences. In the latter case he believed he was right in saying that the officer had no right.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said there was no such right; no person in the employment of the Crown had a positive right of that character.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said there was reason in the refusal of the Secretary of State to make a distinction between the officers of the Army and the Navy. There did, however, exist in the minds of officers who had, perhaps, unfortunately been wrongfully dismissed from the service, a sense of wrong that their cases had never, so far as they knew, been brought forward fully and carefully for trial. It ought not, however, to be beyond the power of the Secretary of State for the time being to devise a process by which these cases could be tried by some competent tribunal, by which tribunal every case would be reviewed as criminal cases were reviewed by the Home Office. That would not abrogate the power of the Crown to dispense with the services of officers where it was necessary. It would also give an opportunity for redressing grievances that might exist and that might be but too well founded. He asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office to make a note of the fact, and to bring it up next year with some proposal for a method more satisfactory than that at present existing.

Major SEELY appealed to the Financial Secretary to the War Office to carry out, now that he was in office, the eloquent words he used when he sat below the gangway. The hon. Member would remember that, on the case of a distinguished officer who was dismissed, he himself brought the matter before the House and in very eloquent language pleaded again and again that officers should have a right to demand a Court-martial. He was sure that anyone who heard the hon. Member then would be quite certain that when they appealed to him to fulfil, when he was in office, what he said when he was out of office, they should plead not in vain. This officer was removed from his position and frequently asked for a Court-martial but could not get one. He would ask the Financial Secretary whether he would not on that occasion say something of the same kind as he said two short years ago, when he vehemently upheld the view which they were now bringing before the Committee.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said he had been very much impressed with the case in question, and he thought that the then Secretary for War behaved with extreme harshness. If the Financial Secretary had changed his mind would he read his own speech in the Kinloch case. He thought that any officer who was under an accusation should have the opportunity of meeting his opponents face to face. There ought to be proper inquiry in these matters and a Court-martial should be held in every case affecting an officer's character. Because there were not trials or Courts-martial in many cases in South Africa he believed a number of gentlemen were under a cloud who did not deserve any imputation.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 77; Noes, 133. (Division List No. 124.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J,
Delany, William
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, CaptEC(StAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, RtHn Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hardie, J. Keir(Merthyr Tydvil
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, J. W.(Worcestersh. N.)

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Higham and Mr. Cathcart Wason.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Arroll, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hon. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour,RtHn GeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour,Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish,V. C. W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Crossley,Rt.Hon.Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, SirAugustus Frederick
Gordon,Hn.J.E. (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon,Maj.Evans(T'rH'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green,WalfordD.(Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marqof (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,Sir James(Staffords.NW
Helder, Augustus
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Hozier,Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir JohnH.
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,Hn.H.L.W.(Mile End)
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks.N.R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col.Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell,Rt.HnSirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell,W.J.H(Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan,DavidJ(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith,Rt HnJ.Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley,Hon.Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt.Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.) moved a new clause as follows, "Anything to the contrary notwithstanding contained in the Army Act all officers, non-commissioned officers, and men shall be equally liable to the punishment provided respectively for the several offences contained therein." The hon. Member said he did not propose the Amendment in any spirit of hostility whatever to the officers of His Majesty's Army, for whom he had a very great respect. He had always found them most honourable and high-minded men, but he thought that no invidious distinctions should be made between them and the men whom they commanded in regard to the punishments to which they should be subjected. He would ask the Attorney General whether, if he were called upon to prosecute any Member of the House, he would deal with the Gentleman any more lightly because he was a Member of that House. He ventured to say that he would press for punishment in a greater degree because he was his fellow Member, if he were guilty of any crime whatever. He would also say that if the hon. and learned Member had to prosecute any member of the profession, of the etiquette of which he was the guardian, for an offence against the moral law he would press for punishment in a greater degree because he was a member of his own profession. In the Army Act the punishments of officers and men were differentiated. In Part 1, Section 6, Sub-section 10, for the offence of leaving his post as sentinel before he was regularly relieved an officer was liable to be cashiered, but a soldier was liable to imprisonment. Under Section 9, Sub-section 2, it was provided that if an officer disobeyed any lawful command given by his superior officer on active service he should be liable to be cashiered while the soldier was liable to inprisonment. There were several other cases in which the same penalties were imposed, such as drunkenness. He submitted that no army could be well governed or well conducted unless the officers of that army set a proper and good example to the men beneath them, and he did not think it could be expected that the individual members of the Army should have any respect for the laws of the Army unless the officers were subject to the same punishment as their men. The present distinction was an invidious one.

Another New Clause (Punishment)—(*Mr. John O'Connor*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Sir ROBERT FINLAY thought he might congratulate the hon. Member upon the interest and vigour of the speech which he had just delivered after an all-night sitting. They both belonged to the same profession, and he was glad that the hon. Member had enlivened the debate as he had done. He thought the hon. Gentleman, however, did not realise what a terrible punishment being cashiered was. It was a punishment worse than death, and he did not believe that there was any officer who would not rather have a sentence of imprisonment than be cashiered. If imprisonment were substituted for cashiering it really would mitigate the penalty. It was realised that a more severe punishment was justified in the case of an officer than in the case of a soldier, and for that reason the officer was cashiered. He hoped the hon. Member would not persevere with this clause.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 82; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 125.)

AYES

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E).
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,CaptEC(S.Andr'wsB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E.)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Leese,SirJoseph F.(Accrington)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond (John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M (Whitechapel)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh.,N.)

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. N. W
Helder, Augustus
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Faversh'm
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S,)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Rt Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-und-Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Schedule :—

MR. J. H. LEWIS moved an Amendment to the schedule in order to omit the words specifying of what the soldiers' breakfast should consist. The allowance was half-a-pound of bread and a cup of tea. It did not include any butter or dripping or margarine, and the men had to be content with a cup of tea without sugar and milk. Some years ago the late Mr. Hanbury made a forcible protest against this treatment of soldiers, and attributed it to the fact that the private soldier had no vote. They ought, as a nation, to be ashamed to treat the private soldier so. What became of all the money which had been poured out so freely during the last few years? Thousands had been spent upon sectarian schools; but the private soldier was treated to breakfast at the rate of three halfpence.

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said the schedule was already part of the Act, because the breakfast as specified in the schedule had already been passed. Therefore the Government could not accept this Amendment. The schedule ran that breakfast was to be as specified in Part I. of the second schedule of the Army Act. The second schedule of the Army Act gave particulars of the breakfasts, and having passed the Army Act they could not go back.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE inquired if the second schedule of the Act had yet been passed; and if not, would he be in order in moving an Amendment.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, on the point of order, said that all that had been proposed was the omission of these words. It was very well known that they could not move increases in Committee, and the only way in which to call attention to the subject was to move a reduction.

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**: I think that the schedule is covered by the last line of Clause 3 in this Bill It does not refer to the Army Act but to the schedule of this Act.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE supported the Amendment. The soldier who read the account of the debate would, he said, be no doubt enamoured at the treatment he received from a grateful country. They were told that they were dependent upon the soldier for sleeping safely in their beds at night. This was a maximum grant in regard to breakfast, and it amounted in cost to three halfpence, when it had been found that to breakfast a child in school cost more than a penny. It would be seen from that the miserable way in which the soldier was treated. The total allowance for a horse was 1s. 9d. per day.

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he is now talking about another line in the schedule, and must confine himself to the Amendment.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE said he was not going to move anything. He simply wanted to indicate a point. It was that 1s. 9d. was the rate for the food of a horse and the total amount for the food and lodging of a soldier was 1s. 7d. Breakfast cost three half-pence, and the allowances were an insult to a soldier in his most vital part which no Englishman could stand.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON inquired if the schedule would not have to be put as a whole to the House, and therefore whether they could not move to amend any part of it.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We have passed to a certain part of the schedule and cannot go back.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he believed he was the only one in the House of the original band of three patentees of all-night sittings on the Army (Annual) Bill. That band consisted of Mr. Bartley, Mr. Hanbury, and himself. There was this essential difference between the discussion in 1893 and the present, because in 1893 the Government of the day altered the Bill and introduced it in an entirely different form from that adopted in previous years. They were opposed by a mechanical majority, but nevertheless their action was justified, because some of the Amendments they had proposed to the Bill were introduced by the Government themselves in the House of Lords,

Mr. McKENNA: But you were dealing with an intelligent Government.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: They were not intelligent during the night they opposed us.

***The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** I must ask the hon. Member to confine himself to the Amendment.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that on the former occasion they objected to the three half-pence for breakfast on the ground that the licensed victualler, out of the kindness of his heart and his generosity and devotion to the service, gave the soldier an excellent breakfast for three half-pence. Their objection was not that the men did not get enough to eat but that the licensed victualler was not paid enough. His knowledge was that the soldier did get a good breakfast, and if there was any injury at all it was to the man from whom it was purchased. He did not see the reasonableness of omitting the provision as to the payment of the three half-pence, because it would leave the licensed victualler with no payment at all.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said the hon. Member who last spoke was quite correct. The effect of this Amendment would be to deprive the licensed victualler of all payment. It was, as a matter of fact, arranged that the private soldier should have an uncommonly good breakfast, and this three half-pence only furnished him with a small part of it.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS said, if his Amendment were carried, its only effect would be to turn out the Government and replace them by other people who would do justice to the common soldier.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE said that not only was three half-pence provided for breakfast, but it was specified what the soldier should receive for it.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he was one of the mechanical majority who divided against the hon. Member some years ago. He then rather sympathised with the hon. Member's argument, and he thought the case that was now made was stronger, because they had in the interval come to voting an additional £15,000,000, and out of that sum something should be found to increase this three half-pence. They wanted to prevent the licensed victualler losing, but the only way they could do that was to move what was practically a reduction.

Amendment negatived without a division.

Schedule agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at a quarter after Nine o'clock a.m.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 7th April, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Morley Corporation.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.] Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. The order made on Tuesday the 7th of March last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged.

Clacton-on-Sea Commissioners Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Read 2^a, and committed for Tuesday next.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Marylebone Chapels Bill [H.L.]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Clyde Navigation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Chelsea Electricity Supply Bill; Epping Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

PETITIONS.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Petitions to be heard by counsel against; of Jewish Master Bakers' Association; Whitechapel and Spitalfields Costermonger and Street Sellers' Union; and persons signing; read, and referred to the Select Committee.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3337. Nicaragua.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877.

Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the sixty-sixth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account up to March 31st, 1905.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury minute, dated April 3rd, 1905, declaring that Alfred Richard Nightingale, assistant in the London Postal Service, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS), ENGLAND AND WALES.

Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended September 29th, 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed, but no copies to be delivered out, except to members of the Committee and such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 42.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

CONTINUATION SCHOOLS BILL (H.L.).

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I have been led to bring forward this Bill by the great desire on the part of many persons connected with education outside that something of the kind should be put on the Statute-book, and by my strong conviction that we must do a great deal more than we have yet done to educate our young people during the most critical years of their lives. I have served on two school boards and on the boards of management of a large number of voluntary schools, and have been brought to feel what an enormous amount of waste is involved in our present system of elementary education; I mean in what we may call the truncated condition of our education, owing to the fact that it stops altogether in multitudes of cases far too soon. The result is to be seen, by anyone who mixes much with ordinary people both in town and country, in a vast amount of ignorance and inefficiency, and, I am sorry to say, also in a vast amount of low taste, which a good system of education might cure in many cases, and a great deal of drunkenness and lust and other things that are doing a tremendous amount of mischief to our national life.

I cannot but feel that if some such simple measure as this was passed into law we might add very greatly to the efficiency of our Elementary Education Acts without increasing very much the expense of their working. It has to be borne in mind that up and down the country there are a number of these continuation schools being carried on at very considerable public expense and, so far as my examination of the results has gone, with comparatively little benefit; so that there is a great deal of direct waste in connection with these continuation schools, and if we established a really good obligatory system it would not involve a great additional expense. Looking at the large sums of money we spend on education, and the immense amount of waste because the education is never carried to a satisfactory issue, I feel that we are, as a matter of fact, spoiling the ship for the proverbial ha'porth of tar, and I hope that before long a Bill of this kind will be placed on the Statute-book.

I have another special reason for dealing with this matter. I spend most of my Sundays in going about from one parish to another in country districts, and I am profoundly impressed by the needs of a vast number of the boys in our villages. The monotony of their lives and the dulness that ensues destroy their real manliness. They leave school at the age of twelve or thirteen, and many of them drift away from all touch with persons who could exercise any higher influence upon them. They learn nothing more and forget what they have learnt and grow up in ignorance and dulness and very often with vicious tastes, and a great deal of this, I venture to think, would be prevented if we could bring about an adequate improvement in our educational system. I may say, also, that I have been encouraged to introduce this Bill by the general interest in the question which has been shown up and down the country by members of county councils, and of local education authorities, and others interested in our public life. I find absolute agreement among leading men who are practically engaged in local affairs, of all political Parties, in favour of some such legislation as this.

I should like to say, with regard to the Bill itself, that it is a purely permissive Bill. That is the first point to be noticed in it. It only provides that local authorities may do such and such things; and they may adopt the Bill, if it is passed into law, not only for the whole of their area, but for any particular part at their absolute discretion. The Bill gives local authorities as free a hand as possible, so that they may adapt the measure to the special needs of their own particular district. I propose also to give them a free hand both with regard to the subjects and method of instruction, and the time during which the instruction should be given. In country places, for instance, there are certain holidays which might be used; and it is obviously desirable that if girls in the country are to have continuation classes they should not be held in the evening, but in the afternoon if possible. I venture to think your Lordships will agree that the best way to get a thing well done is to excite as much local interest in the matter as possible, and then to give a free hand to the responsible local people, and so stimulate local patriotism and local competition as between one locality and another.

I am free to confess that there are one or two defects in the Bill which I should be glad to remedy if there were the opportunity. We have fixed sixteen years of age as the age up to which these lads should be kept under an educational system. Personally, I should much prefer to make the age seventeen. I think that age is on all grounds a better age. Then, again, in this Bill we only require after leaving the elementary school seventy-five attendances in the year in a continuation school or class. I should be inclined to make that 100 attendances. I have been led also to make a further concession by reducing the age of exemption from attendance at an elementary day school to thirteen; and in agricultural districts where boys are engaged in agriculture, in horticulture, or in any other cognate rural industry, I propose to reduce the age of compulsory attendance to twelve, subject to attendance at a continuation class. This, I think, goes to the extreme limit of what ought to be conceded, and I can well imagine that some of your Lordships will think the concessions go too far. I am impressed, however, by the need of keeping in touch with our lads during the most critical years of their lives, from thirteen to sixteen, and I feel that if we could get our hold on them and keep them growing in intelligence and under discipline during those years we should have a far better chance of making good men of them. I have also been induced to make these concessions because I think it important, if an Act of this kind is to be well and efficiently worked, that it should be cordially accepted by the people who have to work it in the neighbourhood, and I have a good deal of evidence to show that if the clause is adopted allowing a boy of twelve years of age to work on the farm or in the garden provided he attends these classes, even the farmers, who are not, as a rule, very enthusiastic for education, would cordially accept the Bill; and I lay great stress on the cordial acceptance of legislation which has to be worked in our rural districts.

In Clause 4 I have introduced a provision which I venture to think will prove of the greatest possible value, especially in country districts. It is that, if a parent so requires, attendances at a recognised Sunday school or class for religious or moral instruction, not exceeding in the aggregate one-third of the minimum number of attendances required in the year, should be reckoned as if they were attendances at a continuaton school or class. I have been met by one or two objections to this clause which I desire to say a word upon in case they should by any chance be held in this House. They come, curiously enough, from very opposite quarters. There is, first of all, the objection which emanates from what I might call the Sabbatarian quarter, from those who have the fear that any provision of this kind, if it were largely worked, might tend to spoil Sunday observance and be a step, so to speak, in the direction of secularising the Sunday. With those feelings I strongly sympathise, but our religious friends who are afraid of anything in the nature of such instruction as this Bill would provide on Sunday forget the high authority we have for doing good on the Sabbath day.

I feel that Sunday might be used to a far greater extent than it is as a day of good instruction. The instruction given in classes like this might have a great effect on the character of our young men and lift them to a higher life. I am not speaking without reference to actual experience in this matter. We have already a good deal of evidence as to the value of what can be done on the Sunday through such classes as these; the most striking evidence is provided by the work which is being done in the adult schools of the Society of Friends. Nothing has done more than the wonderful work of the Society of Friends in their adult classes to impress me with the unused opportunities of the Sunday. The Society, as your Lordships know, is only a small one; yet it has nearly 77,000 persons attending its Sunday adult schools. In the City of Birmingham alone—to take only one instance, though we have such classes in my own city and up and down my own diocese, and some of my clergy, I am glad to say, are imitating them—in the city of Birmingham alone there are 20,000 persons attending the Sunday classes of the Society of Friends. Many well known men give their Sundays to instructing those who attend these classes, among them two previous Lord Mayors of the City. The late Mr. Richard Cadbury, to my knowledge, walked three miles every Sunday morning to meet his class at half-past seven, and that class averaged 500 men. Mr. George Cadbury goes five miles every Sunday morning for a similar purpose, and he has done this for forty-six years or more. We have the example of schools like these to guide us in legislation, and the immense amount of good that has been done by them is more than we can estimate. The Sunday classes contemplated in this clause which some of my friends object to are exactly of the kind which are being conducted by the Society of Friends—chiefly Biblical, but also giving instruction in anything which could be called moral instruction, and so insuring a considerable area in choice of subjects, but, as I have said, chiefly Biblical.

Then there is another objection, in answer to which I desire to say one word. It comes from the Parliamentary side. The average Member of Parliament says—We like your Bill, but for Heaven's sake do not introduce anything about religious instruction or Sunday teaching. I cannot but feel that this objection rests on an entire misconception of the real aim which we have in view. These objectors do not feel the Sabbatarian difficulty at all. They would even play golf or tennis on Sunday, or give dinner parties; they have no objection to laxity in Sunday observance, yet they would draw the line at these classes from some fear which they have not clearly defined; and there are a great many such persons, owing to our unfortunate divisions in the political sphere on matters of religious instruction, who have come to look upon religion as a thing which must not be touched in political life. They almost look upon it as a thing only to be quarrelled about. Some of these objectors remind one of a certain Scotsman who the other day, in consequence of a famous decision of this House, declared that he meant to give up religion altogether and join the Establishment. There are a great many in English public life who hold that sort of view. I feel that if we are to build up the character of our people, especially in the rural districts, we must discard this kind of objection and attack their needs in a sincere spirit, remembering always that our working people in the country have very little leisure except on Sundays, and that Sunday is very often to our lads and young men a very dull day. They live in a dull and sometimes vicious atmosphere, and my desire is to permeate their lives with higher interests and higher tastes and more wholesome enjoyments. This is a subject which has been on my mind a long time. Along with various friends I have been pleading for some continuation in our education for thirty years. We have tried many experiments, but have long ago come to the conclusion that only some obligatory system such as this will cure the defects in our national educational system and help us to educate the mass of our young men and make them better men and better citizens. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

*The LORD ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY: My Lords, I waited some moments before rising in the hope that some lay Member of your Lordships' House rather than another from the Episcopal Bench would say a word upon this subject. It is a subject that cuts deep and reaches far in our national life, and I should like to express complete sympathy with the object and purpose of the Bill which my right rev. brother has introduced. The details of the measure obviously require careful consideration. There are questions about the limits of age, the manner in which the cost of such an arrangement should be borne, and a great many other things in the Bill, which, should it go beyond its present stage, would require very careful consideration at the hands of your Lordships; but I am perfectly clear that some measure of this kind is urgently needed. There are many of your Lordships who have, indirectly at least, had brought to your knowledge the educational standard reached by the men who are at present being enlisted as soldiers in His Majesty's Army, and I think everyone who has investigated that subject must have been startled by the portentous ignorance which is displayed by young men who only a few years ago were sharp and apparently quick-witted boys in the upper standards of our elementary schools.

The extent to which a boy who leaves school at the age of fourteen may lose all the education he has acquired is really appalling. Some of your Lordships may remember that about ten years ago an investigation was made in the Eastern Counties by one who was keenly interested in this matter as to the degree of knowledge retained by boys who had a few years before left school. The matter was brought forward in an important speech in the House of Commons at that time, and the statistics are well worthy of the perusal of any one who doubts the urgency of the need to which the Bishop of Hereford has called attention. The Report which was then laid before the House showed that 100 boys were taken at haphazard from the ranks of the young agricultural labourers, and it was found that of the boys between sixteen and eighteen one quarter could write fairly, one quarter moderately, and quite one half could only write in the most disgraceful manner, both as to penmanship and as to spelling; while in arithmetic 75 per cent. could not answer a single one of the simple questions set. Yet many of these boys had a few years before been in the village school, and some of them had attained to the sixth standard, and your Lordships will remember that the sixth standard means no inconsiderable degree of attainment. It covers not only a thorough facility in reading and in writing, in parsing and in English composition, but it includes also the higher branches of arithmetic, and sometimes the elements of algebra. What we have to note is that it is possible, by the absolute discontinuance of anything which stimulates intellectual powers, to lose to a degree which would seem incredible every vestige of such knowledge which has already been acquired.

The object I have at heart in furthering such a proposal as that which the Bishop of Hereford has put before your Lordships is that by some means or other there shall be compulsion on boys to ensure that they shall, during those critical years, keep alive the learning they have already acquired, and we have to remember that very little work—say a single hour a week—will serve to keep it alive. The exact process by which that can be done is a most legitimate subject for discussion, but that something of the sort is needed does seem to me to be outside controversy altogether. There can be no doubt that to allow to go to waste the education which has been given to the young at considerable labour and expense must be most injurious to the country. What is wanted is some prophet or leader to show the country, what none of us at present understand, how to give to the youth of the country, between the ages of ten and thirteen, that kind of education which will be most effective in the years that immediately follow, and to ensure that it shall not disappear altogether when the school days are actually over. I venture to hope that the wider consideration of the subject, which will be stimulated by the introduction of such a Bill as this, may lead to some fruitful suggestion being made for bringing about that result.

I do not for a moment contend that the education which these youths receive in the primary schools is worthless because it is so soon forgotten. The teaching of what is called "the three R's" exercises an influence upon a boy's intelligence, even if the actual power of reading, writing, and doing sums has largely passed away. Many of your Lordships will recall the years you spent in the writing of Latin verses. I do not know how many of those to whom I speak would be able to produce this afternoon such a set of Hexameters as you could write with tolerable ease at the age of eighteen or nineteen. Yet it cannot be said that these Latin exercises bore no fruit. In the same way it cannot be denied that these youths may have attained to a higher type of intelligence because of their efforts for the acquisition of something which subsequently passed away. But still the country is not doing what it might do to keep alive in after years such a glimmer of intellectual knowledge as would enable a boy to take advantage of plain and simple literature that might be put into his hands. I do not believe in the theory that the thing is impossible, and that it is not impossible is shown by the indisputable fact that the state of things is not the same all the land over. Many of your lordships are familiar with the intellectual standard attained and maintained by boys and young men in the Highlands of Scotland, and you must have been struck by the higher intellectual intelligence of the gillies in the Highlands as compared with boys of the same age and circumstances in the South of England. That is due to the fact that great pains were taken in Scotland a little while ago to set up the tradition of a higher education and intelligence which has permeated from generation to generation, and it is because we want to stimulate in this country something of that kind, which should ultimately at all events produce a different condition of matters from that with which we are familiar to-day, that we support this proposal. Let anybody contrast the boys he will find in an elementary school at the age of thirteen, sharp, keen, and quick-witted, and take those same boys five years afterwards and see the condition of stolid animal stupidity into which many of them have fallen, and he will realise that some measure such as that suggested by the right rev. Prelate is urgently required if we are to look forward hopefully to the real advancement of the people of England.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, I can assure the most rev. Primate who has just spoken, and also the right rev. Prelate who is responsible for the introduction of this Bill, that I sympathise to a great extent with their remarks, and I recognise that the objects of the Bill are approved by all classes. My mind goes back to a deputation on this subject which was introduced to me by the right rev. Prelate, composed of gentlemen whose names are household words as experts not only in educational matters but on all questions connected with local government, and I do not for one moment regret that the right rev. Prelate has brought this matter forward. The Bill deals with a question of great interest and great importance in the educational training of children. I have listened, as I always do, with respect and admiration to the words which fell from the most rev. Primate, who seldom addresses your Lordships on any subject without giving us some practical advice. I do not differ from him in his remarks as to the deterioration which is found in the youths of this country between the time they leave the elementary schools and enter the Army and other walks of life, but I ask, where does the remedy lie? It is a very difficult problem to solve. We have done our best, at great expense, to provide the very best education that can be given in elementary schools, and from there undoubtedly the boys turn out bright, cheery, and intelligent; but as to how we are to deal with them after they leave school in order to maintain that condition of efficiency while they are passing through that hobbledehoyhood, if I may use the expression, between boyhood and manhood, completely baffles me at the present moment. But I can assure the right rev. Prelate that I shall consider what he has said and endeavour, so far as lies in my power to find some solution of the problem, though I do not say—indeed I should be unwise if I did—that I anticipate being able to find a satisfactory solution.

I turn now to the provisions of the Bill. At present children, under general circumstances, must attend school until they are at least twelve years of age. In 1899 a Bill was passed through Parliament which made special provision for children in agricultural and rural districts, enabling them to go to work in the fields at eleven years of age, provided they attended school 250 times a year till the age of thirteen years. That is the condition of affairs at the present moment. The right rev. Prelate proposes to change that thirteen years to twelve years, on the understanding that, after arriving at the age of twelve years, four years are to be spent by these children in attendance at evening continuation schools. The object, of course, is to give assistance in rural districts where labour is scarce, and knowing the difficulty of getting labour in agricultural districts, especially at certain times of the year, I have every desire to assist agriculturists in the matter. Therefore that object commends itself to me, as I am sure it does to all your Lordships. We must admire the desire of the right rev. Prelate to give some kind of education to the youths and maidens of the country between the ages of twelve and sixteen, which is a very important period in the lives of the rising generation. I can assure the right rev. Prelate that he has my most sincere sympathy in that, and were his Bill to go no further, and it could be proved that these two points could be carried into effect without any difficulty, he would have no more cordial supporter of the Bill than myself.

But I am bound to point out that there are difficulties which, I regret to say, prevent our giving him assistance in passing the Bill. In the first place, it introduces an absolutely new principle in authorising the application of compulsion to secure attendance at other than elementary schools. On this ground alone I could not advise my colleagues or your Lordships to accept the measure. I know the right rev. Prelate will say that this is an entirely permissive measure, and that the local education authority need not put it in force unless they consider it necessary; but I would point out that if a local education authority did take advantage of the Bill, should it become law, they must be prepared to enforce all the details of the Bill, and those details, I think, from the compulsory point of view, would be extremely dangerous and detrimental to the interests of the country. The right rev. Prelate took credit for moderation in only requiring in his Bill this year that there should be seventy-five hours attendance a year up to the age of sixteen; but I object to extending compulsion beyond its present limits even to secure seventy-five hours attendance. The principle of the Bill would operate most unfairly on parents whose children had shown special talent, and who might not have the same need as others to remain at school till the age of sixteen.

I turn to the question of expense. I do not suppose the right rev. Prelate will contradict me when I say that if his Bill was accepted by Parliament in its entirety it would add to the cost of education. The last speech I addressed to your Lordships was in reply to Questions put to me by Lord Galway and Lord Harris, who complained of the great height to which the education rate in their respective counties had risen. I regret the height to which the education rate has been allowed to rise, but I pointed out in my reply that it rested to a great extent with the local education authorities. The right rev. Prelate's Bill must necessarily increase the cost of education wherever it becomes operative. If the Bill became law, teachers and school attendance officers would be called upon to perform extra work, which they would no doubt gladly do, but for which they would expect some extra payment.

I am not quite certain from the wording of the Bill whether the right rev. Prelate intended to place these schools under Part III. of the Education Act, which, as your Lordships know, deals with elementary schools, or under Part II., which deals with secondary education; but I assume, looking to the terms of the right rev. Prelate's Bill of last year, that these schools are to be regarded as coming under Part II. If that is the case, I would point out to the right rev. Prelate that Clause 18 of the Act of 1902 confers this power on the local education authorities—

"The county council may, if they think fit, charge any expenses incurred by them under this Act with respect to education other than elementary on any parish or parishes which in the opinion of the council are served by the school or the college in connection with which the expenses have been incurred."

Therefore, if this Bill becomes law, and if these schools are to be regarded as coming under Part II., it may be possible to set one up in a particular area, to force children in the area to go to it, and to charge the cost on the area, although the people of the area do not want the school.

The funds for higher education are already heavily burdened. I have been told privately by noble Lords that at the present time the demands on these funds are so large that some counties may have to approach the Local Government Board for power to extend the limit of the twopenny rate. If they have to do that with the expenses at present involving upon them, how much more so would they have to do it if they had this extra burden put upon them? Then, again, comes the question: How are these evening continuation schools to be provided? There are a large number of such schools in the country at the present moment, and they are doing a great work, but how are these schools to be provided in the remote rural districts? In the big towns and even in the smaller towns there would be no great difficulty in providing them, but how are they to be provided in remote rural districts? And if they are not provided in those districts the concession given to agriculturists by allowing children to go earlier to work on the fields cannot be taken advantage of. Experience has taught us that in thoroughly rural districts evening continuation schools, which have done a great amount of good in supplementing elementary education, cannot do effectively the work of an elementary day school. The right rev. Prelate laid stress on the advantage of encouraging attendance at Sunday schools. No one has more sincere regard for Sunday schools than I have, and I endorse all that he said on that subject; but the provision in this Bill with regard to Sunday schools would necesitate these schools being placed in some measure under State supervision, a formidable undertaking which would require serious consideration. I trust that the right rev. Prelate will not think that because I have pointed out the great difficulties which surround this measure I am throwing cold water on his well-intentioned efforts. I have, of course, to look at the question from every point of view; I have to regard it from the point of view not only of the Government but also of the ratepayer. I regret I cannot ask the House to support the Bill because it introduces a spirit of compulsion of which I do not approve, and throws an extra burden on the already overburdened ratepayers. I hope the right rev. Prelate, while accepting my sincere sympathy, will not think it necessary to go to a division.

*The Marquess of RIPON: My Lords, I confess I am a little doubtful of the value of the sincere sympathy of the noble Marquess who has just sat down. He has left the matter, it seems to me, in a very unsatisfactory condition. The question which is being discussed tonight is one of the most important connected with our educational system. After what has been said, with all the authority of the most rev. Primate and of the right rev. Prelate who has charge of the Bill, it would be simply wasting your Lordships' time if I were to repeat what they have said, but I think it is impossible for anybody who is at all acquainted with the condition of education in the country, and especially in the rural districts, to deny that unless something more is done after children leave school they lose in an almost singular manner the knowledge which they have had imparted to them in the elementary school. There can be nothing more important than to prevent the sacrifice of what has already been taught at great expense and with a great deal of labour by tiding over the interval between the time when lads and maidens leave school and the time when they fully enter upon the business of life.

Now that is a question of first-rate importance, and we are told by the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Education that it baffles him. The noble Marquess will, I hope, pardon me if I say that I think it is part of the functions of his office that he should not be baffled by these difficulties, but should set his mind to deal with them. If the noble Marquess had come down to the House and said that he did not like this Bill, that he thought the proposals in it were bad, but that he had a much better scheme which he would lay before your Lordships either to-night or on some other occasion, I should have felt it my duty not to support the right rev. Prelate if he had thought it necessary to press his Bill to a division. But that is precisely what the noble Marquess has not told us. He admits the difficulty; he admits the urgency; he admits the necessity; but he has no idea what ought to be done in order to meet the case. In those circumstances it seems to me that the House had much better pass the Second Reading of the Bill and affirm the principle. I do not profess to say that I do not see difficulties in the details of this measure. I do not profess to say that it could not be amended in Committee. I believe it could. But I do say undoubtedly, after the *non possumus* speech of the noble Marquess, the House ought to pass the Second Reading of the Bill.

*The LORD BISHOP of HEREFORD: My Lords, before the debate concludes I hope I may be permitted to add one or two observations. I do not propose to follow the noble Marquess through his arguments on the details of the Bill, but I should like to remove one misconception in regard to the Sunday classes. As I said previously, the proposal simply means giving a remission of one-third of the minimum number of attendances required in the year if the child attends at a recognised Sunday school for religious or moral instruction. All that would be required would be a certificate from a recognised authority that the child had been under instruction for so many Sundays. There would be no necessity for State inspection or any expense whatever. There is no doubt some force in what the noble Marquess said with regard to the expenses of the continuation schools falling on the secondary education fund, and as a member of my own county authority I am well aware how great is the objection felt to adding anything to the expense of secondary education. Our county authorities are averse to anything like a county rate for secondary education. As things stand at present, the Education Act of 1902 unfortunately throws all the expense of education, except for elementary schools, on the secondary education fund, which consists mainly of what is known as the whisky money. I cannot but hope, however, that some change may be introduced in that respect. I do not look upon the Act of 1902 as in the nature of a law of the Medes and Persians which must not be changed. I venture to think that the comparatively small additional expense which such a system as this would involve might be readily met, if not out of Imperial taxation, at any rate out of some combination of taxes and rates. I thank the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Education for the sympathy he has expressed, but I must confess I do not appreciate the difficulties he sees in the way. The noble Marquess and those who agree with him think it is not opportune that this Bill should be pressed. This being so I have no desire to take up the time of the House unnecessarily upon it. I am in the hands of the House, and am prepared to withdraw the Bill if it is the wish of your Lordships.

Earl SPENCER: No, no!

The Marquess of RIPON: Divide! divide!

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THE QUADRANT OF REGENT STREET.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: My Lords, I rise, in accordance with the Notice standing in my name on the Paper, to ask His Majesty's Government whether the buildings now being demolished in the Quadrant of Regent Street have any defect which necessitates their removal; whether the sites on which they stand are under the control of His Majesty's Office of Woods and Forests; and whether, in rebuilding on those sites, His Majesty's Government will have due regard to the architectural continuity of Regent Street.

I do not think it necessary to trouble your Lordships with any lengthy remarks, because I am anxious more to obtain information than to pass criticism on any action taken in this respect. I do not think there is any need to remind your Lordships of the unique position and the unique features of Regent Street, and especially that part of it known as the Quadrant, which is now under the hammer of the housebreaker. This part of Regent Street is one of the most interesting, I might even say beautiful, architectural features of a town which does not abound in architectural beauties, and I therefore ask, first, whether there is any real and sufficient reason for the demolition of these houses. I ask that question, knowing full well that at the time of their erection by the architect Nash, it was generally stated that they were not well built, and were not of a sufficiently good material to last a long time. A rhyme was current at the time that Augustus had found Rome of marble but had left it of brick, and that Nash had found London of brick and left it of plaster. Therefore, there may be real reason for the demolition of these houses. I ask, secondly, if it is necessary to pull these houses down for architectural or other reasons, whether His Majesty's Government will do their best to see that some architectural continuity, if not the exact façade as now, is preserved in the rebuilding of these houses. There was a parallel case in Paris. Two or three years ago it was proposed to build a large hotel, and the French Government insisted that in the building of that hotel certain architectural features should be preserved. His Majesty's Government have additional right to take action in this matter because, as I understand, the land on which these houses stand is under the control of the Woods and Forests Office. They have therefore a considerable *locus standi* in the matter. I do not know whether it is completely under their control. I do not know how far the County Council has control over it; but I am sure the County Council would be in every way desirous of considering the architectural features of the metropolis. I hope His Majesty's Government will be able to give satisfactory assurances that in the rebuilding on this site due regard will be had to one of the most important and interesting architectural features of the Metropolis.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Lord WINDSOR): My Lords, I rise, on behalf of the Treasury, to answer the Questions which have been put by the noble Viscount. There are three distinct Questions in the Notice which my noble friend has placed on the Paper. The answer to the first is that the buildings in the Quadrant and in other parts of Regent Street are not considered suitable for modern requirements; they are for the most part not well built, and do not utilise the sites which they occupy to the best advantage. It is, therefore, proposed to rebuild the Quadrant as the present leases expire, or earlier if suitable opportunities occur. The reply to the second Question is that it is quite true that the ground landlords are the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and the answer to the third Question is that it is intended to have regard to the continuity of architectural design. I may add a word in explanation and tell the House that Mr. Norman Shaw has been requested to prepare a design for the whole Quadrant. Mr. Norman Shaw is familiar to your Lordships as an eminent architect. This design is not yet finally settled, but it is the intention of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to rebuild the Quadrant in one design, and not allow buildings of a patchy description. The Commissioners of Woods and Forests are fully alive to the importance of the houses in the Quadrant being rebuilt on the design of an eminent architect, and of the continuity of the buildings and the present curve of the Quadrant being maintained.

THE IMPERIAL YEOMANRY COMMITTEE'S ACCOUNTS.

*LORD HARRIS, on rising "to call attention to the Report of the Accounts Committee on the final account of the Imperial Yeomanry Committee (Third Report, page 13), and to ask His Majesty's Government what steps they propose to take to rectify the mistake into which the Accounts Committee has been led," said:—My Lords, It would not have been necessary for me to trouble your Lordships this evening upon the matter I am about to bring to your Lordships' notice if the War Office had, as I think they might fairly and even in justice ought to have done, protected a very limited number of individuals who consider themselves to be aggrieved, and whom on this occasion I represent. Your Lordships may remember that there were a few gentlemen who were suddenly impressed, so to speak, by the War Office a few years ago, and placed in a position of considerable publicity, in order to assist the War Office in raising the Imperial Yeomanry for service in South Africa. That body was entitled the Imperial Yeomanry Committee, and certain funds were entrusted to it for expenditure. In course of time, that expenditure, being of public money, came under the review of the Auditor-General, and subsequently the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons. Last year, late in the session—I think in the month of August—the Public Accounts Committee published their Report, and I will take leave to read to your Lordships the portions of the Report upon which I wish to comment to-night. "The Final Account of the Imperial Yeomanry Committee" is the heading of a paragraph on page xiii., and the Committee there say—

> "Out of the total sum granted (£1,265,000), it appears that for more than one-third (£460,000) no details or vouchers can be produced, and failing these the Comptroller and Auditor-General asked for a certificate from the accountants. He has received this certificate, but it is to an account in a summary form, without any sub-vouchers for purchases. It is obvious that this, being the certificate of the accountant of the expending parties, and unsupported by vouchers, is in the highest degree unsatisfactory, and precludes any real audit of the accounts."

That paragraph is full of errors. It says, in the first place, that

> "No details or vouchers can be produced."

That is absolutely incorrect. All the details and vouchers are in existence. It goes on to say—

> "And failing these the Comptroller and Auditor-General asked for a certificate from the accountants."

The Auditor-General never asked the accountants for a certificate. What happened was this. Directly the Imperial Yeomanry Committee was formed, it appointed a very well-known firm Messrs Kemp, Sons, and Co., to be the accountants of the Committee, and the body from whom the Auditor-General asked for a certificate was not our accountants, but the War Office. It is quite possible that the request passed first through the Treasury, and then on to the War Office, but in the form in which it finally reached our accountants—I have the letter here—it did not say that any vouchers were required; it simply said that the Auditor-General required a certificate, and suggested to our accountants the form in which the certificate should be supplied. Upon that request the certificate was supplied. Our accountants, as a matter of fact, were never asked for any vouchers by the Auditor-General, and that is the reason none were supplied. The Report goes on to say—

> "The Director of the Finance Department at the War Office expresses the hope that this experiment of trusting outside parties to per-

form War Office work will never again be resorted to, in which your Committee cordially concur."

Of course, the Director of the Finance Department at the War Office is quite entitled to express a pious opinion on a subject of that kind, if he pleases; all I can say is that that opinion is absolutely opposed to the opinion of the noble Marquess who was at the head of the War Office at the time the Imperial Yeomanry Committee was formed, who insisted upon the Imperial Yeomanry Committee being a separate body, and who would not allow it to be brought under the immediate supervision and control of the War Office.

Now, my Lords, what I complain of is not the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. They have obviously been misled by the evidence that was placed before them. The evidence was placed before the Public Accounts Committee by Sir Douglas Richmond, as I believe he is now—he was then Auditor-General—and in the presence of a representative of the War Office. The representative of the War Office was Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, who, I believe, is now Accountant-General at the War Office, and he was present when Sir Douglas Richmond was asked certain questions which I take leave to read to your Lordships—

"Did you make any attempt to get any details and vouchers?—Yes, I have asked for vouchers.

"And you have not obtained them?—I have not received them.

"Am I right in presuming that it is in consequence of your failure to obtain them that as a last desperate resort you fall back upon the suggestion that the Committee's accountants should give their certificates?—Yes, that is so. I observed that accounts were mentioned, and I thought at least I might get a certificate from the accountants.

"In this case, where so large a sum is involved, the total expense of the Committee, if I am right amounting to something like £1,265,000, in respect of £460,000 odd, that is to say, more than one-third of the whole amount, you have received no vouchers and no details?—That is so.

"And, as a matter of fact, you have only fallen back upon that suggestion because you were unable to get either vouchers or details?—That is all I could get, and I thought I would state the facts plainly to Parliament."

Lord Harris.

Subsequently this question was put to Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson—

"Have you any remarks to make with regard to this matter?"

This was the representative of the War Office, but I submit he was also something more under these circumstances—he was there to defend the business capacity and the honour of the Imperial Yeomanry Committee, because that Committee were never called by the Public Accounts Committee. Not only were the Imperial Yeomanry Committee never asked, or any member of it, but its own accountants were never asked to go before the Public Accounts Committee or to give any evidence whatever about this subject. I submit, therefore, that Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, as representing the War Office, was bound to consider the interests of the Imperial Yeomanry Committee when its system of business was being challenged by the Auditor-General. He was asked if he had any remarks to make with regard to this matter—"this matter" being that the Auditor-General had told the Public Accounts Committee that no vouchers could be produced for an expenditure of half a million of money; and he said in reply—

"Yes. I have this remark to make—that the Yeomanry Committee was an organisation entirely outside the War Office."

Yes; of course it was, because the Secretary of State for War had put it outside the War Office, and Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson was a subordinate of the noble Marquess who was then at the head of the War Office. He continued—

"The Government at the moment decided to entrust to a Committee of noblemen and gentlemen the creation of a field force, and they took such steps as they considered necessary to create it. The War Office action was limited to paying for it."

The Chairman said—

"We are not blaming you."

and Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson went on:

"No; but I think it is fair to state that to lead up to what the hon. Member is putting to me. The War Office action was limited to finding £40 per horse and £35 per man, and the whole administration, accounting, and everything concerning this force was to be kept entirely in the hands of the Yeomanry Committee, and we were not to interfere with it. Later on the conditions of affairs changed, and we were brought into close touch with the administration by the Committee of the Yeomanry—"

—this is the remark to which I take exception—

> "And we have done our best to put things on that footing which is the recognised footing in dealing with Army accounts; but we have to deal with what we found, and not with what we created."

That is as much as to say that no accounts were properly kept until the War Office took the matter up. I submit that that is absolutely incorrect, that the accounts connected with this £460,000 were kept properly, and in an admirable manner, by the accountants, that the officials who preceded Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson in his office as head of the Accountants Department in the War Office knew perfectly well that these accounts were properly kept, that the vouchers were in existence, and were forthcoming with all the crossed cheques as well. But Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, without reference to his predecessors, who would have known the facts, took it upon himself to throw over the Yeomanry Committee and to suggest that they never kept their accounts properly, and that it was only when he and his colleagues came in that a commencement was made towards the proper keeping of proper accounts. I submit, my Lords, that that is not a fair way of protecting the gentlemen who were the colleagues of the officials of the War Office for some twelve months, and that we might have expected from the officials of the War Office a more considerate regard for our character as business men. The suggestion is that although we might be good business men in our private affairs, we considered that this being public money it mattered not twopence to us whether proper accounts were kept or not, and Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson makes no attempt to protect us from the charges brought forward by the Auditor-General.

But, my Lords, I go further. The fact that this was a complete mis-statement of the facts was brought before the War Office during the course of certain correspondence in the autumn of last year, and up to January of this year, but the War Office have absolutely declined to take any step publicly to rectify the mistake or to withdraw the charge which has been made against the Imperial Yeomanry Committee. It is quite true that a Question was asked the other day in the House of Commons upon this paragraph in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, and Mr. Arnold-Forster in reply said—

> "The statement in question would appear to be based on replies given by the late Comptroller and Auditor-General—"

Yes, but they were replies made in the presence of Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, the representative of the War Office, who took no steps whatever to correct them.

> "I understand that vouchers are, as a matter of fact, in existence, although they have not been rendered to the War Office."

They could have been rendered to the War Office at any time if the War Office had asked for them, but they never asked for them. So far from asking for them, they said they did not want them. In addition to that, I am told on very fair authority that the War Office even suggested that they should be burnt, and it was only the care of our accountants which prevented that suggestion being carried out. The Secretary of State went on to point out that the War Office treated the whole of this expenditure in the same way that it treats the capitation grant of the Volunteers; that is to say, that the money is put into the hands of the commanding officer, and as long as he produces the man properly equipped, and evidence that he has put in a certain number of drills, etc., they require no further voucher. Very well; I think that that is a very reasonable way of dealing with that expenditure, but it was not what the War Office required of us. As regards the money spent by the Yeomanry colonels, the War Office first told us that they would require no vouchers at all. Two years afterwards they changed their mind, and asked for all the vouchers, and we produced all the vouchers we could. But that money is not the sum referred to by the Accountant-General. It is an entirely different sum. The sum I am referring to is the £460,000 spent by the Yeomanry Committee itself. We kept the accounts of it; we have those vouchers now; the War Office knew or ought to have known that we had them it ought to have been, and I have no doubt that it is, on the records of the War Office that those vouchers were in existence. When that fact was challenged by the Auditor-General, the representative of the War Office ought at once to have corrected the error, and I submit that in addition to the grievance which I and my colleagues think we lie under, the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons have every right to complain of the way in which the evidence was placed before them. The course I suggest the War Office should now adopt is to do in consequence of my public appeal to-day what they have declined to do in response to the private appeals which have been made to them, viz., to acknowledge that the information that was placed before the Public Accounts Committee was not correct, and to express their opinion that if correct information had been placed before the Public Accounts Committee that body would not have passed upon the business capacity of the Imperial Yeomanry Committee a judgment which, in our opinion, is decidedly injurious to us, both as regards our capacity as business men and also as regards the public duty which was laid upon our shoulders at the time.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, the noble Lord who has just sat down has, under the shadow—I do not use the word in any offensive sense—of a rather innocuous Motion, made a very severe attack upon a distinguished public servant. I am not going to follow the noble Lord in that attack further than to say that I believe, and I hope I shall be able to prove to your Lordships, that it is absolutely and entirely unjustified. The noble Lord complained, secondly, that Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson believed that the accounts of the Imperial Yeomanry Committee were not kept properly until it fell to his lot to have to deal with them. I confess that after a very careful reading of the evidence I can find no justification for that complaint. But, after all, the gravamen of the charge lies in this—and the noble Lord will correct me if I am misrepresenting him. The noble Lord complains that the Comptroller and Auditor-General gave the Public Accounts Committee the impression that these vouchers did not exist, and that Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson should have contradicted him. My Lords, the Comptroller and Auditor-General stated nothing of the kind. He stated that he had never seen these vouchers, and that was an absolutely true statement. He made that statement three or four times.

*LORD HARRIS: It is in consequence of your failure to obtain them. That is from the question put by the Public Accounts Committee.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: Quite so. Perhaps I may go through this rather more in detail. In reply to Question 3303 the Comptroller and Auditor-General says—

"I have had no vouchers for any of those purchases."

In reply to Question 3305—

"I have asked for vouchers."

In reply to Question 3306—

"I have not received them."

My Lords, that was an absolutely true statement, and obviously it was perfectly impossible for Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson to contradict it. I admit at once that the Public Accounts Committee in their Report state that these vouchers did not exist, and they refer to these very questions—I think they quote in the body of the text Question 3308—as their justification for stating that they did not exist. I regret that they drew that conclusion. It is not my business or the business of anybody else to dictate to the Public Accounts Committee what impression they should take from the evidence submitted to them. I can only say, with great respect, I do not think I should have drawn the conclusion they drew from the evidence placed before them. I am perfectly aware that these vouchers did exist, and I regret very much that by the statement of the Public Accounts Committee what I cannot help feeling is an injustice—though I am sure an unwitting injustice on their part—has been done to the noble Lord who represents the Imperial Yeomanry Committee, to his Committee, and, above all, to the firm of accountants whom they employed to manage the accounts for them. It is the case that these vouchers exist; I admit it at once; and I claim that there is no justification in this evidence for saying that they did not exist. That is the reason why Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson—obviously, as I think —did not contradict the Comptroller and Auditor-General. I think perhaps I ought to say why these vouchers were not called for, and here I disagree with the noble Lord as to a matter of fact. I am informed that the reason we did not call for the vouchers was that we considered that the sums expended were covered by the capitation grant of £75 per man and horse that we had provided for the Imperial Yeomanry Committee. We knew that they had employed a firm of first-class accountants to help them manage their financial affairs, and we did not consider it necessary to call for detailed vouchers. We had an absolute precedent for the course we followed. It is exactly the same course as is followed with regard to the Volunteer capitation grant, although, of course, that is a much smaller amount. The 35s. per man is given to the commanding officer, and we ask for no vouchers. We followed exactly the same course in dealing with the Imperial Yeomanry Committee.

*Lord HARRIS: Would the noble Earl mind reading Question 3322?

*The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: I think that supports what I have just said. It was for them to decide what form of accounts they should use. I am not contesting that for a moment.

*Lord HARRIS: But would the noble Earl mind reading the question?

*The Earl of DONOUGHMORE: Well, my Lords, I think this is hardly necessary. This is not the Public Accounts Committee and the noble Lord is not catechising me. I do not recognise the question straight out as regards the context, but I am informed by my financial advisers that what took place was as I have just stated. Of course, the noble Lord has a great advantage over me in this matter. He put the Question down only last night, and my financial advisers have been employed on the Public Accounts Committee all day; but I have done my best to meet him, and these are the facts as given to me by my financial advisers. I have but one word to say in conclusion. The noble Lord asks what attitude the Government intend to adopt in regard to rectifying the mistake into which the Public Accounts Committee had been led. I can only say that it is impossible for us to dictate to the Public Accounts Committee as to any opinion they may take. They are not subject to the Government or to anybody else. But I can assure the noble Lord that we do not associate ourselves with them upon the statement of fact which they put forward in regard to this particular matter, viz., that vouchers were not kept. We know that vouchers were kept; we are quite satisfied as to the way in which they were kept; and we regret the unjust impression that has been allowed to obtain in consequence of what I can only regard as a misconception of the evidence placed before them.

Lord SHUTTLEWORTH: My Lords, I am unwilling to trouble your Lordships, but as an old member of the Public Accounts Committee, and as one who served on that body for a great many years, perhaps I may be allowed to say a word or two on this matter. The noble Earl who has just addressed the House has spoken as if the Public Accounts Committee had fallen into an error. I think the noble Lord who brought forward the question was perfectly justified in saying that everything the Public Accounts Committee state in their Report was based upon the evidence placed before them. The noble Lord has called attention to the questions which were asked and the answers given to those questions, and I submit that taking questions and answers together it is perfectly clear that the Public Accounts Committee put the questions to elicit whether or not these vouchers existed. The answer given by Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson was, to this question—

> "Were any explanations given by the Committee as to their not keeping proper accounts?"

Perhaps I had better read his answer It was—

> "I do not know exactly what their explanation was, but I think they considered that they

received a certain amount of capitation grant, and expended it practically in the interest of the country, and it was for them to decide what form of account they should use."

But that is no answer to the suggestion that no proper form of accounts was used, and I confess that reading, as I have read, the evidence upon which the Committee base their Report, I can come to no other conclusion than that the Committee were perfectly justified, on the evidence given by the Comptroller and Auditor-General and by the representative of the War Office, in reporting as they did. I just say that as an old member of the Public Accounts Committee, as I am a little jealous of the proper performance of the work of the Committee of which I was for so long a member.

But, my Lords, I think the noble Lord who brought forward this question might have strengthened his case if he had referred to the exact procedure employed by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. The Comptroller and Auditor-General has in the War Office and in the Admiralty his own officers who carry on what is called a continuous audit. In that respect the system in the War Office and the Admiralty is different from the system pursued in some of the Offices. It would be impossible in those great spending Departments to carry on the audit in any other way. Therefore, it is the practice to ask for these vouchers continuously, and it is obvious to me, reading the evidence of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, that these vouchers had been asked for in the regular course. If there were vouchers and there was some reason for not producing them, he would have been informed of the fact, or the Committee should have been informed of it. It seems to me that the noble Lord has a grievance, which has not been answered by the noble Earl representing the War Office, in the fact that the War Office did not inform, in the first instance, the officers of the Comptroller and Auditor-General; in the second instance, the Comptroller and Auditor-General when he made his Report; and, in the third instance, the Committee of Public Accounts, that proper accounts were kept, and that there were vouchers, although there may have been reasons of policy for not producing them.

*Lord HARRIS: My Lords, may I be allowed by way of reply to say a word? I have to apologise to the noble Earl for not giving him earlier notice of my intention to raise this question, and I am extremely obliged to him for having consented to reply at such very short notice. I was very sorry to have to make an attack upon Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, who is an old friend and colleague of mine, but I gave him fair notice a fortnight ago that I was going to put the Question, and I think that what he has to complain of is that the War Office did not earlier make that handsome apology which the noble Earl has made to-night, and which I am perfectly certain will be as satisfactory to my colleagues as it is to myself.

YESTERDAY'S DIVISION.

Lord NEWTON: I have to inform the House that a mistake was made in the votes in the division yesterday in which my noble friend the Chairman of Committees and myself were named tellers. My noble friend desires me to say that the mistake arose from the fact that it was the first time he had discharged the duty.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of Halsbury): Do your Lordships agree that a correction be made in the Journals of the House? The number of the "Contents" should have been 70, not 68.

The correction was ordered to be made.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: In accordance with the notice I gave yesterday, I beg to move that the House resolve itself into Committee *pro forma* to have the Bill reprinted, and I would suggest that the Amendments be made on Report so as to save a further Report stage.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived.

On Report—

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH moved that the Amendments of which he had given notice be inserted.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Bill recommitted to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended. (No. 43.)

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend Section 82 of the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882. Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 44.)

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 7th April, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Croydon Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Hastings Harbour District Railway (Abandonment) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).

Sir Joseph Leese reported from the Committee on Group G of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at a quarter-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table.

Street Betting Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 155.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law relating to the Area of Service of the Regular Militia when embodied." [Service of Militiamen Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a scheme made by a Committee of the Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council under the Municipal Corporation Acts, 1882 and 1885, relating to Merthyr Tydfil." [Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the sale of the Chapel of Saint Paul, Great Portland Street, and for the endowment of the Chapel of Saint Peter, Vere Street, in the event of that Chapel having a district assigned to it; and for other purposes connected therewith." [Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the construction of the tramways and works authorised by the Mexborough and Swinton Tramways Act, 1902, and the Rawmarsh Urban District Council (Tramways) Act, 1900; and for other purposes." [Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to transfer the Renfrew Harbour Undertaking to the Trustees of the Clyde Navigation; to abandon the works authorised by The Renfrew Burgh and Harbour Extension Act, 1899; and for other purposes." [Clyde Navigation Bil [Lords.]

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 156.]

Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords]; Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Aberdare Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Perth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dunoon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Exeter; Holbeck; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Barnes; Battersea; Berkhampstead; Bexley; Bollington; Bosworth; Brighton (four); Buckhurst Hill; Charlton; Chelmsford; Derby; Edinburgh (two); Gainsborough; Garboldisham; Guildford; Harrow Green; Hatfield; Hove (two); Ilfracombe; Kennington; Melbourne; Monmouth; Oxford; Parkstone; Saffron Walden; St. Giles; St. Pancras; Sydenham; Wimborne; and Woodeaton; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR TAX.

Petition from Leeds, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.]

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-sixth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 3rd April, 1905, declaring that Alfred Richard Nightingale, Assistant in the London Postal Service, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3337 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Scotch Ex-Elementary School Teachers in Receipt of Pensions.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he can state the number of Scotch ex-elementary school teachers now in receipt of retiring allowances, with the amounts of the pension or gratuity in each case, distinguishing between allowances granted by the Scotch Education Department and by Scotch school boards respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The existing pensions granted by the Scotch

Education Department are as follows:—36 pensions of £30 per annum; 84 pensions of £25 per annum; 102 pensions of £20 per annum; 1 pension of £15 per annum; 10 pensions of £10 per annum. A sum not exceeding £100 is also available each year for gratuities. I am not in a position to furnish information as to the number of teachers in receipt of retiring allowances from school boards.

English and Welsh Ex-Elementary School Teachers in Receipt of Pensions.

DR. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can state the number of English and Welsh ex-elementary school teachers now in receipt of superannuation allowances under the Teachers Superannuation Act of 1898, with the amount of annual allowance in each case.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) 458 men and 301 women are at present in receipt of superannuation allowances under the Teachers' Superannuation Act of 1898. As the amount of the allowance differs in each case, I am afraid it is not possible to give the information asked for in the last part of the Question.

Underfed School Children at Leeds.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the report of a special meeting of the Leeds Education Committee, held on Tuesday, April 4th, at which the chairman of the school attendance committee reported that there are 4,047 underfed children in daily attendance at the public schools, of whom 3,371 are children of deserving parents; and whether his Department proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) I have seen a newspaper report of the meeting referred to, but am not in a position to check the accuracy of the figures given. The hon. Member is probably aware that it is in the power of every local education authority to appoint medical inspectors, through whom the condition of the children attending school could be more satisfactorily ascertained than through the reports of teachers.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of the special meeting of the Leeds Educational Committee on Tuesday last, at which it was officially reported by the chairman of the school attendance committee that over 4,000 children attend the schools hungry, most of them the children of deserving parents; and whether his Department proposes taking any action to enable the local board of guardians to assist in providing funds to enable these children to be properly fed.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have not seen the report to which the hon. Member refers, nor have I received any information with regard to the matter.

Condition of Engines and Boiler Tubes of H.M.S. "Latona."

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether H.M.S. "Latona's" engines have been examined prior to her departure for Newfoundland; if they have been examined, what condition were the boiler tubes in; whether any of the tubes which should weigh 27 lbs. only weighed 15 lbs; and, if so, will the Admiralty put new boiler tubes into the "Latona" before sending her across the Atlantic.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The machinery of H.M.S. "Latona" was examined at the end of last year, and it was then reported that no defects were known to exist in the engines or boilers which would affect the seaworthiness of the ship. The boilers were examined and tested in January last, and the life of the tubes was then given as three years. A few of the tubes were drawn at the end of March, when the average loss of weight was found to be 27 per cent. and the maximum 32 per cent., not 44·4, as suggested in the third part of the Question. It is not, therefore, intended to put new boiler tubes in the ship before sending her across the Atlantic.

Removal of Railings in Green Park.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, by whose authority were some sixty feet of the railings removed on Thursday last from the Piccadilly side of the Green Park, immediately opposite the end of the sixty foot roadway recently formed in that park; with what object were these railings removed, and what is proposed to be put in their place, whether a narrow gateway to admit foot passengers only, or a broad entrance capable of admitting carriage traffic.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The footgate, which gave access to the Park a few feet further west, is being moved so as to be in line with the centre of the new pathway; only a sufficient length of railing has been removed to enable this to be done. It is being carried out under the authority of the First Commissioner.

Quarterly Returns of Revenue and Expenditure—Suggested Issue as Parliamentary Papers.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the objection, if any, to issuing as Parliamentary Papers the quarterly accounts of revenue and expenditure which are furnished by His Majesty's Government to the Press at the end of each quarter, and copies whereof are supplied to the Vote Office for such Members as may apply for them; is he aware that no copies of these accounts are kept in the Library or are otherwise permanently accessible to Members of this House; and is there anything to prevent arrangements being made for the issuing of these quarterly Returns as Parliamentary Papers at the same time as and in addition to their supply to the Press.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The quarterly accounts are delivered to the Vote Office for the use of Members and to the newspaper offices on the evening of the last day of each quarter. If the accounts were presented as Parliamentary Papers objection would presumably be raised in the House of Commons if they were circulated to the Press before being delivered to Members. It would be undesirable to discontinue the existing practice whereby the accounts are furnished to the Press on the last day of the quarter and published therein on the following day. I am not aware that copies are not kept in the Library, but I imagine that there would be no difficulty in arranging that they should be placed there if the Librarian finds that any hon. Member desires it.

Salaries of Irish School Teachers.

Dr. MACNAMARA: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the average salary from all sources for the last completed year for the public elementary school Irish head master, the Irish certificated assistant master, the Irish head mistress, and the Irish certificated assistant mistress respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) In the year 1903, the last for which figures have yet been compiled, the average incomes from State sources of the four classes of national school teachers indicated were as follows:—

Head Masters - - -	£100
Head Mistresses - - -	£85
Assistant Masters - -	£70
Assistant Mistresses - -	£57

The average incomes, from State and other sources combined, for the year 1904 can be ascertained from returns furnished by the teachers themselves, but it will take some time to procure the necessary information. I have asked that it may be obtained, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member in due course.

Irish Ex-Teachers in Receipt of Pensions.

Dr. MACNAMARA: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of Irish ex-teachers now on the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund, with the yearly amounts of pension or gratuity in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The number of ex-teachers now on the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund is 1,897. The amounts of pension received are very various. The hon. Member will find the scales and conditions on which they are granted set forth in the Irish Teachers' Pension Rules, 1897, which have been printed and published. No gratuities are awarded, but in certain cases the premiums paid by a teacher are refunded to him in a single payment.

Dundrum Central Asylum — Regulations regarding Letters written by Patients.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the rules regarding the writing of letters by patients confined in the Dundrum Central Asylum; how many can be written by a patient during a month; whether an appeal lies to the lunacy inspectors or to him in cases where the Governor does not submit letters written by patients; and whether his attention has been called to a number of letters written by a patient in this asylum named Logue during the months of September and October, 1904, and January, 1905, not forwarded by the Governor, and will he inquire into this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The regulations permit patients to write two letters on the first of each month, and at other times under special circumstances. All communications which, in the opinion of the Resident Physician and Governor, contain improper matter are submitted by him to the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums, and are dealt with by them under the asylum rules. Certain letters recently written by the patient named were withheld by the Resident Physician and Governor, with the concurrence of the Inspectors.

Mr. Young's Estate, Culdaff, Innishowen.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an application has been made by Mr. Young to the Estates Commissioners to have his estate, situate at Culdaff, barony of Innishowen, county Donegal, sold to his tenants; how many, if any, agreements have been lodged by the landlord as signed by the tenants for the purchase of their holdings; and whether, seeing that a portion of this estate, situate in Glengad, is one of the most congested districts in the county of Donegal, and that on account of the price demanded from the tenantry on this portion of the estate none of them have agreed to purchase, will the Estates Commissioners withhold their sanction of this sale to the tenants on the remainder of the estate until the landlord agrees to sell at a fair price the congested districts portion, either to the Congested Districts Board or to the tenants direct, at a price to be fixed by the Estates Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Agreements for the purchase of holdings were lodged in 204 cases; but before sanctioning the sale of any portion of this estate the Commissioners are considering the advisability of purchasing the Glengad portion of the estate under the provisions of Section 6 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, and, in that connection, contemplate having a further inspection made of this portion of the property.

Army—Number of Recruits.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War what were the numbers of recruits taken during each month from October to April in 1903–4 and 1904–5 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The numbers, excluding colonial enlistments, were as follows:—

	1903–4.	1904–5.
October	4,155	3,348
November	3,718	3,414
December	3,150	3,024
January	5,225	4,372
February	4,200	3,449
March	3,449	*3,150

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*Colonel DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs) said it was only a few days ago that he was asked to take the place of the Member for the Epping Division, who was unable to be present to take charge of this Bill on the back of which his name appeared, consequently he felt a disadvantage in attempting to replace him. He felt so strongly of opinion that a change in the law was necessary and advisable, that he had put his name on the back of the Bill. It had been alleged that those who supported this Bill represented a small number of people, and that the Bill was not in consequence worthy of the serious consideration of the House. They were told that those who transgressed the present law, or who would contract such marriages if the law were altered, were seldom met with, and that matters might safely be left *in statu quo*. As an argument that was futile. They had to consider not only the masses, but the wants and desires and the real good and well-being of the few. The small number aggrieved might not be able to bring pressure to bear upon the electorate, and their views might not be pushed at general elections, but if there were a hardship, and there was no reason of great strength against removing it, the House abrogated its functions if it did not notice complaints and make some effort to remedy the situation. They knew that many Members felt strongly from points of view which every one must respect, even if they thought they were wrong or far-fetched, and consequently he would endeavour to be scrupulously careful and adopt a courteous tone, giving due weight to their opinions.

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*Approximate.

He would first consider the grounds of the opposition to this Bill. What was it that was specifically alleged against it? If any opponent could prove that in supporting this Bill they were acting in defiance of the highest law, that was the Divine law, then there was no more to be said. But he found in the discussion of the Bill of 1903 that point was specifically abandoned by the hon. Member for Stretford, who said that, in his opinion—and that was of no small weight, because he held a high position, not only in the legal profession but in the Church—there was no such question, and so they were left, if other hon. Members agreed, to find other grounds. Now, what justification had they from the point of view of the opinion of the country? They knew the opinion of the Treasury. The deceased wife's sister was as far removed from being a relative as any stranger, and was treated as an absolute stranger to her brother-in-law. This question was first raised after many years by the Act of 1835, under conditions which the hon. Member for Stretford said few could justify. The purpose of that Act was to place such marriages upon a strictly legal footing, but the promises given at that time were never redeemed. So that in the view of the hon. Member for Stretford there was no justification for the present condition of things, because if Lord Lyndhurst had carried out his intention, as his hon. friend said there was no excuse for not doing, finality would have been attained, and the question of these marriages would not now have been in a condition which needed any argument. The House was so dissatisfied, however, upon this question that since the year 1835 this Bill had passed seventeen Second Readings in this House, and had passed entirely through it no less than seven times, while it had also passed the Lords, but unfortunately in a different year. The majorities had constantly grown larger, and in 1903 the Bill was sent to a Grand Committee, whose peculiar constitution allowed such close scrutiny and prolonged discussion that the Bill got no further. But for that scrutiny it would probably to-day have been the law of the land.

By whom was it opposed? Almost entirely by one Church, which was, no doubt, powerful, but whose action consisted mainly of setting up peculiar views in regard to the marriage laws directly in the teeth and against the wishes of this and the other House. Consequently this Church was arrogating to herself the interpretation, if not the making, of the laws relating to marriage, a matter which was entirely apart from her proper functions. Was the Church of England the only church whose opinions were worth having? There were the great Scottish churches, containing clergymen and members who were certainly not less attached to the observance of the moral law and securing the sanctity of marriage than the members of the English Church. Did Scotch churches hold out upon this question? No, they did not. The Nonconformist English churches were in favour of the Bill, and surely they were as anxious to maintain the moral law as any other church. Then there was a church which took closer cognisance than any other of the intimate life of its people—he alluded to the Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church, recognising no danger to morality, granted dispensations much more freely than to marriages with which fault could be found upon the ground of consanguinity. If this measure were favoured by the people represented in this House, and by the hereditary Members of the other House, and by most, if not all, of the churches, why should this reform be denied? Had they not met many of the objections raised to the Bill of 1903? The Bill which he held in his hand was practically as it had emerged from the Committee, after the fullest discussion and scrutiny. They were told that the Bill was not wanted. The hon. Member for Tunbridge said he never heard anybody ask for it except a few highly-placed law-breakers. Then why was it brought up again and again? Why was it that in his own constituency, among hundreds of people who had been asked, the average result was that thirty or forty were in favour of the Bill to one against it. He knew of cases, and could easily find many more if he looked for them, in which these marriages had been of the greatest possible advantage to the children, and which had turned out to be of the happiest description. The cases that had been brought to his notice were not those of wealthy people.

Surely there should be one law for the whole Empire. What did they find now? The Synod of the New South Wales Church recognised the position, and had put itself in conformity with the law of the State. The Australian Commonwealth had now taken the matter up, Cape Colony had followed, and he understood the Dominion of Canada was on the point of giving these marriages complete official and Parliamentary support. He was by no means in favour of being governed by the Colonies, but what he went upon was that the action of the Colonies showed no evil results. Was it not a strong argument for doing that which would prevent much harm to innocent children? Parents were legally married in one part of the Empire, but in other parts they were not, and the children were illegitimate in the eye of the law. The hon. Member for Tunbridge, in 1903, in an earnest, well-meaning speech, said that, no doubt, all excellent sisters-in-law throughout the world must in future be unable, if the Bill passed, without reproach to be treated as members of their brother-in-law's family. He must know cases where terrible results had arisen, or he would not make such strong statements. He could not have said what he did say without having cases to quote, for he should not attack the characters of many women merely on hypothesis. Surely, instead of indulging in futile prophecy, unsupported by a scrap of evidence from the numerous countries where the custom existed, those who desired to prevent these marriages should give other reasons. Many marriages ought to be prevented—marriages of consanguinity, marriages of the physically weak, and so on, but surely they should not brand many of their fellow-citizens throughout the Empire as incestuous and corrupt by holding out against a beneficent change in a law which was never intended to remain on our Statute-book. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said that when he heard that this Bill was going to be introduced again, his first thought was to take a leaf out of the Government book and treat it with contempt. He believed the question was purely academic, and certainly the Bill was not likely to pass in the present Parliament. They had the extraordinary spectacle of a Bill which carried behind it, according to its supporters, a tremendous demand on the part of the people, and yet when it was called there were only twenty-one Members present in the House, many of whom were opponents of the measure.

*Colonel DENNY: I hope the hon. Member has not forgotten the all-night sitting.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said he had not forgotten it. If there was any desire for the Bill he should have thought that hon. Members would have sacrificed their rest in order to do what his hon. friend described as a just act demanded by so many people in various parts of the country. When the Bill was last sent to a Standing Committee it was found to contain so many illogicalities and absurdities that, notwithstanding every effort to accelerate the proceedings, it took no less than nine days to get it through, and even then the Bill was inadequately discussed. If it went to a Standing Committee again it would have no chance of being passed by the House when it came back, because only two days were allotted to private Members Bills on the Report stage. Some very big Bills, including the Trades Disputes Bill, had been referred to the Standing Committees, so that there was not the slightest chance for this Bill passing into law this session. He regretted that his hon. friend had embarked on a course so fruitless and likely to lead to so little result.

This Bill had no real backing either in the House of Commons or the country. His hon. friend had tried to show that the Bill had a backing in the House of Commons because it had been passed by growing majorities, but he could hardly have studied the figures for recent years. In 1901 only 401 Members were found willing to vote on the Bill at all—that was rather more than half the House. The majority in its favour was 157. In 1902 only 373 voted, and the majority was 125; and in 1903 only 258 voted, and the majority fell to 27. Therefore it was not strictly accurate to say that the House had shown an increasing interest in the Bill. Why was it that the Bill had passed the Second Reading seventeen times and had never been carried into law? It was because in the crowded state of the Legislature nothing could be carried into law which had not a strong popular backing outside. A few people, most of them well to do and holding big social positions, who had broken the law such as it was at the present time, were in favour of it. It was not a poor man's Bill. It was a rich man's Bill. He had no recent figures to quote, but in 1847 a Commission was appointed to collect statistics of all the marriages which had taken place since the passing of the Lyndhurst Act. It was found that 1,048 marriages had taken place, and they were mostly among people who were comparatively well to do. There were only forty among poor people. These figures showed that this was not a poor man's question at all. It had been stated that a large number of his own constituents in the Tunbridge Division were in favour of the Bill. Having represented the Division in three Parliaments, he claimed to know a little more about the constituency than his hon. friend. Perhaps he had done wickedly in many things, but no one had ever blamed him for having taken a prominent part against this Bill.

He had not acted on his first thought of treating this measure with contempt, for the reason that a very serious question was involved. It was all very well to say that they were going to legalise a certain form of marriage which was desired by some people. What was really proposed was to alter the whole system of marriage law which had existed in this country ever since it had been a Christian country, and it was not proposed to offer any logical substitute. What was the present basis? It was the oneness of the flesh between man and wife, which resulted in the perfectly clear doctrine that a man must not marry any relation of his wife whom he could not marry if she were his own relation. That was a clear doctrine which had been acted upon in all times since this country became Christian. It was the doctrine held by all branches of the Christian church. He knew that in recent years some Christian bodies had revolted from that doctrine. He very much regretted their action. His hon. friend had stated that the Roman Catholic Church did not hold that view, and that these marriages were permitted by dispensation. But dispensation implied a law, and if there was no law no dispensation would be necessary. Dispensations were granted by the Roman Catholic Church not merely for marriage with a deceased wife's sister, but for other marriages within the prohibited degrees. If they took the line that there should be no prohibition on the ground of affinity and that the only prohibition should be with respect to blood relationship, they would, at all events, substitute for the present Christian law a law which was not opposed by physiology and science. But they were doing nothing of the sort by this Bill. Why did they not say also that a woman might marry her deceased husband's brother. Why not abolish all the prohibitions on the ground of affinity? As it was, by the present Bill they would be introducing a state of chaos and discrediting the whole marriage law.

The Bill was, as was discovered in Grand Committee last year, full of illogicalities and absurdities. It sought to remove what was called a colonial grievance, and it applied to this country the colonial law that the children of such unions were in law legitimate, and could inherit property in cases of intestacy. He should be quite willing to meet that objection by accepting the Colonial Marriages Bill; but he would point out that by accepting the proposals in the present Bill all the difficulties were not removed. No doubt the children of such marriages would be legitimatised; but, by the retrospective clause, the rights of others who had inherited property under the existing law would not be touched. The honour of legitimacy was given to the children, but the effects of illegitimacy were not interfered with. Then, another example of the inconsistency and absurdity of the Bill was in its effect on the law of divorce. For the purposes of marriage the Bill would enact that a deceased wife's sister was no relation, and being no relation a man could marry her. But the divorce law was left to stand as it now was; and if a man married his deceased wife's sister it would be regarded under the law of divorce as an incestuous relationship. Again, there was the point connected with the treatment of the deceased wife's sister after marriage with her brother-in-law by the Treasury. For the purposes of the income-tax a married couple were regarded as one; but for the purposes of the estate duty they were two. After all, the Treasury did, by this inconsistent attitude, gather in a large amount of money to support the State expenditure; but the Bill of his hon. and gallant friend would do nothing in this respect but institute a large amount of uncertainty. He would give another instance of the illogicality of the measure. The Bill said that in all cases, the Bill being retrospective, where a man had gone through the form of marriage with his deceased wife's sister, he would be legally married for all possibilities to come till the marriage was dissolved. But what would be the result? A man might have gone through the form of marriage with his deceased wife's sister. At present that was no marriage; and if the man chose to treat the woman badly, he might desert her and never intend to live with her again. Notwithstanding the fact that these people were separated and that they did not want to live together again, the effect of this Bill would be that they would find themselves compulsorily married. Now, did his hon. and gallant friend really begin to see that that would be an advantage? His hon. and gallant friend must see that, whatever might be said for the general principle of the Bill, when it came to be applied in practice it was impossible and absurd and would introduce chaos into our marriage law.

As to what had been done in Committee the last time the Bill was considered, he insisted that the same would be done again. He did not wish to lay too much stress on his opposition to the details of that Bill. His objection to it was grounded on principle. He believed that the Bill was unfair to women generally. Women were not on the Parliamentary register; they were not heard in this House under a women's suffrage. He believed that if there was any means of ascertaining the opinion of the great majority of women in this country it would be found to be strongly against this Bill. The Bill introduced a new inequality between the sexes. At the present time they were absolutely equal in the prohibited degrees between men and women. But under the Bill there would be twenty-nine restrictions in the case of men and thirty restrictions in the case of women. The House had no right to introduce that inequality without taking steps to discover the real opinion of the women of the country on that point. But the graver point was how a Christian nation ought to consider the effects of this Bill. He maintained that upon the sanctity of the marriage tie the moral health of the people depended; and he claimed that our Christian religion had tended successfully to make the marriage tie more respected in this than in any heathen country. Were they going lightly to throw that over? For his part he protested, and would ever protest, against tampering with the marriage tie in any shape or form in this country no matter what had been done in our Colonies or in other countries. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

SIR ERNEST FLOWER (Bradford, W.) said that an intelligent foreigner who had happened to come into this House that day must have been surprised to learn that the subject under discussion in the British House of Commons was the great and important change in the marriage law contained in the Bill of which the Second Reading had just been moved. Like himself, the hon Member for Kilmarnock Burghs had passed through the night in this House; and when he thought of the crowded state of the benches on that side of the House and on this, a few hours ago, when they were discussing the question as to whether three half-pence should be paid for a soldier's breakfast, and the state of the benches now, when they were discussing this infinitely greater and more important question; when, moreover, one cast one's eye up to the public gallery and saw how meagre was the attendance, he believed that his hon. friend the Member for the Tunbridge Division was amply warranted in saying that his first notion as to how this Bill should be treated was that of contempt.

His hon. and gallant friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill spoke of it as if it were promoted by hon. Members on both sides of the House. He did not think that that was quite accurate. This Bill had behind it the support of the very strongest organisations in the country. He did not in the least wish to say that people who wished a change in any law had not a perfect right to organise to secure that end, and get together large funds for that purpose. The Marriage Law Reform Association was a body, with its office and paid secretary, which carried on a very active propaganda. But this Bill had behind it, also, the support of another very powerful and important body—the great Liberation Society, consisting of persons who conscientiously desired to see the Church of England disestablished. That body comprised very wealthy and influential persons who had, in times past, collected enormous sums of money, and, by one means or another, had brought great force to bear in Parliamentary elections. His hon. and gallant friend might say that this question was not one which played a great part in general elections, and that there were many arguments that might be advanced on the one side or the other for or against the Bill. He recognised the tone and temper with which his hon. and gallant friend had discussed this question; but, after all, it was one of those subjects on which they might differ profoundly. That, however, was no reason why they should differ bitterly, or think unkindly of each other. He fully admitted the excellent motives of his hon. and gallant friend in moving for a change in the existing law, and he hoped that the hon. and gallant Gentleman would feel that those who were obliged to oppose him did so also from conscientious motives.

He did not think it necessary to go into the religious aspects of this question. These had been stated in many books and in speeches in this House in former years. The law, as far as that aspect was concerned, had been stated with unrivalled eloquence by the late Mr. Gladstone. And if the hon. and gallant Gentleman would read that speech he would find the view which the Church of England had consistently held on this matter stated with the greatest precision and in language of surpassing beauty. His hon. and gallant friend had spoken of the action of the Roman Catholic Church on this matter. He did not know if his hon. and gallant friend had had the privilege of personal acquaintance with the late Cardinal Manning. His lamented Eminence was essentially a Cardinal who was in sympathy with democratic movements; and yet there never was a stronger opponent of this measure than that great Churchman, unless it were another great philanthropist differing from him widely upon questions of theology—he meant the late Lord Shaftesbury. These two great men, though they differed widely in their theological standpoint, were united in their opposition to the principle of this Bill. He denied that this was a poor man's question; and in regard to the argument that the Bill would strengthen the golden link of Empire, he repudiated the notion that we were called upon to change our marriage law at the bidding of the Colonies. He was not a married man himself, but from such inquiries as he had been able to make from friends of his who were married ladies, he found that the great majority were not in favour of the measure. The Bill would create as many difficulties as it would remove, and its opponents were resolved, by every legitimate means in their power, to prevent it being passed into law. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said he found himself in the same difficulty respecting the question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister as he did with regard to free trade, for he had never heard any real argument brought forward against it. Though the hon. Member for Tunbridge taunted them with the small number present when Mr. Speaker counted the House, he never told them that those who were opposed to the Bill left before the House was counted. The hon. Member also remarked upon the small majorities secured for the Bill during the last few years compared with previous years; but since he first had the honour of presenting the Bill the rights of private Members had been very much infringed, and they could not get the same House on a Friday as on a Wednesday. The hon. Member for Tunbridge had remarked upon the hardship of a man and his deceased wife's sister who had married and lived together but who had separated; but a year's grace was allowed them to go to the Law Courts, and by mutual consent get their marriage annulled. The fact was, the opposition to this Bill was not a matter of argument, but merely one of sentiment, honest sentiment on the whole no doubt. This was why in the speeches of those opposing it they seldom found anything which would bear an argumentative answer.

He felt that the feeling in favour of the Bill was steadily growing, and this year they had one new feature in the fact that both the Commonwealth of Australia and the Cape of Good Hope had sent to this country strong petitions in favour of the Bill. But the Colonial Marriages Bill would not meet the grievances of those in this country. Moreover, that Bill provided that at all events one of the parties must be domiciled in the colony, and he could not help thinking that a great deal of confusion would arise over the legal definition of the word domicile. It would give an opportunity to rich people to acquire domicile in a colony, but to the poor this would be prohibitory. Even now the law favoured the rich man, because there were plenty of rich men who had leisure to go and live in foreign countries or the Colonies in order to have their marriages legally celebrated. The poor man had no such loophole. The poor man had no means of evading the present law, although he might want to do so. He pointed to the fact that the Bill had always had the support of the Labour representatives in the House, and he argued that it was a poor man's Bill. He declared that there was no law on the Statute-book whose history was so disgraceful, and, proceeding, he admitted that they would never get a great wave of feeling to make it absolutely imperative upon the House to pass the Bill because it affected very few people. It was only supported by those few people, and those who were honest and unselfish enough to support it on behalf of those who were suffering He did not know whether the people of his county were more honest and unselfish than others, but he knew that there had never been a candidate for Norfolk, on whatever side of politics, who had not pledged himself to support this Bill. It was because those who suffered this injustice, hardship, and cruelty were so few in number and perhaps weak in influence that they who supported the Bill thought it all the more necessary to make strenuous efforts to pass it. He felt that the tide was on their side, and that the day would come when the present iniquitous law would be amended.

*MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said any question affecting the marriage law must of necessity be of extreme importance. He was bound to say at the outset of his remarks that he did not take the same view of the religious and divine aspect of this question as was taken by some of his friends. He founded his objection to this measure on other than directly religious grounds. The question he desired to put to the House was this, supposing the marriage law was altered as proposed, would it tend to enhance the social and moral purity of society or would it tend to deteriorate the level of our social and moral purity as it existed to-day. It was because in his view the tendency of this Bill as a whole would be in the direction of deterioration in the moral atmosphere that he was opposed to it, and it was on those lines that he wished to address the House.

One of the first matters they had to remember was that they were dealing with the question of affinity and not of consanguinity, because whatever might be the view of the principle and doctrine underlying the marriage law, it was essential to realise with what they were dealing. He admitted that the question of affinity did not affect his mind to such an extent as would the question of consanguinity. Now this question of the principle and doctrine of marriage must go to the root of the whole system of civilised society, and they could not deal with a doctrine of this kind without realising that the marriage relationship, and the relationship between man and woman in respect to marriage, constituted one of the great barriers and foundations upon which the whole of our civilised life depended. Therefore those who proposed to make any alteration in the law and established practice in regard to the marriage law ought to show a very strong case for upsetting the very complicated social relationships, and the customs that had sprung up, having regard to the state of the law as it stood at the present time. Had they considered what marriage meant? He took the view of Lord Stowe that they had to look on marriage partly as a civil contract between the parties, and partly as one of the great religious rites. If for a moment they looked on marriage merely as a matter of contract, it was a contract entirely unique in its character and incidence, and it could not be approached from the point of view from which many of the advocates of the measure had approached it, viz., that if the two parties, the widower and his deceased wife's sister, desired to enter into a contract of this kind, they ought as a matter of freedom of contract to be allowed to do so. But there were wider reasons of social custom against it, and this was no justification for proposals to alter the marriage contract which was the foundation of the whole system of civilised society.

So far as the question was a religious question, he approached it not from the point of view of Divine sanction, but from the point of view of the partially sacred character of the contract in question. Christianity as a whole, apart from any doctrine or dogma, had always regarded this rite as of primary religious importance, and some of the denominations regarded it as a sacrament. All religious denominations of the Christian Church regarded marriage as a rite of primary religious importance. What had been the effect? The effect had been that up to a comparatively recent date the marriage law was entirely under the cognisance of our Ecclesiastical Courts. To his mind great inconvenience and disadvantage arose therefrom. One of the primary causes of the breach between this country and Rome was the rebellion against foreign intervention in appeals on the marriage question. But if they went a little back and came to more modern times they found there were gross cases of irregular marriages which took place under the marriage laws, and what was almost as bad, the continual friction between our ecclesiastical and civil tribunals with regard to this great doctrine of marriage, which gave rise in this country to the distinction between "voidable" and "void" marriages, which led to the introduction of what was called the Lyndhurst Act. He thought Lord Lyndhurst's Bill undoubtedly introduced an innovation in the right direction. It said that whether they dealt with consanguinity or affinity this distinction between voidable and void was to come to an end, and that marriage within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity (he would not enumerate those degrees now) in which marriage was not allowed were to be in the future void altogether.

He did not wish to say anything about the conditions which brought about Lord Lyndhurst's Act, but he would say one word as regarded the history which was told in so interesting a way by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton on a former occasion when this question was before the House. The right hon. Gentleman seemed then to think there was something in the nature of a common agreement that after the Lyndhurst Act had been passed an Act was to be passed making legal the marriage between a widower and his deceased wife's sister, and, that this not having been done, the Bill then before the House ought to be passed. He did not agree with that argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, but if any one could convince him that marriage with a deceased wife's sister would conduce generally to increased social purity and morality, he was open to conviction, and he would support the Bill. It was because he did not believe that this alteration could have anything but a bad effect that he should oppose it. There were, no doubt, a certain number of cases where difficulties if not harshness, had arisen owing to the deceased wife's sister not having been able to come in in the capacity of a mother to her deceased sister's children. When such cases arose everyone must sympathise with that individual, but he protested against their allowing their sympathy to run away with what was the real principle. This was a most important matter, and it must be argued apart from these so-called especially hard cases. It should be considered on a much broader ground. The broad ground on which he approached the question was this: ought the sister-in-law to be in the position of a possibly marriageable woman or not? That was the real question, and he did not think that anyone could look at the social conditions of this country without coming to the conclusion that the sister-in-law in the interest of public morality and purity ought to be as nearly as possible in the position of a sister and not of a marriageable stranger. What was in the knowledge of everyone was that the present relationship between a brother-in-law and his sister-in-law was one of the closest and nearest, and that any alteration in the law would tend to make an alteration. He could not agree that the relationship between a man and a marriageable woman was the same as that which now existed between a man and his sister-in-law, and what he could not appreciate in this controversy was that people did not see how this would be upset if this Bill were passed. Attention was continually being called to exceptional illustrations, but fortunately, after all, there were limitations. The number of widowers who had sisters-in-law were limited, and it was not always that a widower wanted to marry his sister-in-law; there was a further limit in the fact that a sister-in-law did not always wish to marry her brother-in-law. He did not base his opposition on the grounds of religious or Divine sanction, but he did say that when, they came to this question, which was of extreme importance as regarded our social life, there was a strong preponderance of argument against the proposals of this Bill and in favour of keeping the marriage law as it was at the present time. He knew of no instances of hardship such as those given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton on a former occasion, but he knew of many instances where the existing relationship between a man and his sister-in-law would be most unfortunately interfered with and upset if this Bill became law. Let hon. Members keep their minds on the larger question and let them consider what the women themselves think about it. Were they desirous of an exceptional liberty in particular cases in order to be deprived of one of the greatest liberties they had?

He did not believe there was any wide demand for this Bill, and he believed if it were passed it would upset one of the purest and best of social relationships for an infinitely small class.

The framing of the Bill involved some complications of an extremely difficult kind. So far as the colonial argument was concerned it was perfectly possible to put all the colonial difficulty right to-morrow by a Colonial Marriages Act without upsetting all those social relationships which were so dear to us. He looked upon our marriage laws as the essential part of the foundation of our social life, and he should deeply regret the alteration that would ensue if this Bill were sanctioned.

*Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) said he supported the Bill because be believed it would make for the public morality and social purity of the community, and he hoped the House of Commons would once more testify its approval of the principle of the measure. Judging by the speech of the hon. and learned Member for the Stretford Division the religious argument had been practically abandoned.

*Mr. CRIPPS said he expressly reserved his opinion on the religious question.

*Mr. EUGENE WASON said that, at any rate, the hon. and learned Member based his argument on other than religious grounds. So far as the Colonies were concerned, it was said that the disadvantage under which they laboured could be put right by passing the Colonial Marriages Bill. But if this measure were carried, that of itself would put the Colonies in a right and proper position in relation to the mother country. He could not conceive why any Members should object to this Bill's becoming law except those who, like the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich, strongly objected to it on religious grounds. On this matter he believed the noble Lord was as absolutely wrong as he was right on the fiscal question. Reference had been made to Scotland. But Scottish law was in many respects entirely different from English law. He remembered a Scottish minister who, when performing the marriage ceremony, always said to the couple, "My friends, marriage is a blessing to few, a curse to many, and a great uncertainty to all; will you venture?" They always did venture, and having ventured and found marriage a blessing, what greater compliment could be paid to the deceased wife than that her sister should marry the widower? Was it not strong evidence that the first wife had been well and kindly treated? He had known many of these marriages, and he defied any person to find happier unions. It was a scandalous injustice to the poor children that such marriages should be illegal, and for their sakes, if for no other reason, the Bill ought to receive a Second Reading. With regard to the old argument that man and wife were one flesh, he remembered Mr. Justice Maul once saying that if a man killed his wife it was murder and not suicide, so that that argument might be pushed too far. If by the marriage of A and B they became one flesh then C who was A's brother, could not marry D who was B's sister. He submitted that it was not in the interests of public morality or decency in this country that there should be a great many citizens who obeyed the law in all other respects, and yet in this matter went outside the law. Such marriages could not be made penal, they were simply illegal. He hoped that illegality would be swept away, and that those men—of whom he was not one, as he would never have the chance—who wished to contract such marriages would be permitted to do so.

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) opposed the Bill because he believed it would do harm to the social welfare of the people. Nothing should induce them to change the marriage laws but overwhelming testimony of the necessity for such a change. But no such necessity had been shown. A very few cases had been mentioned as happy marriages between the brother-in-law and the sister-in-law, but no one had suggested that the general acceptance of such marriages would be a benefit to the people as a whole. The attenuated state of the House indicated there was no enthusiasm for the Bill. It might be asked what testimony there was against the Bill. He submitted that the burden of proof that the change was generally wanted lay with the promoters of the Bill. He agreed with those who believed that this was a class measure in favour of the rich and not in favour of the poor, a view which seemed to be proved by the extraordinary regularity with which the Bill was passed in another place. There was the testimony of Bishops and clergy in the East End of London and those who lived among great populations that the Bill would do extraordinary injury to a vast number of poor people in their charge. The House was asked to look to foreign countries and our Colonies. But that argument might be pushed a little too far. If the Colonies felt they laboured under a grievance, he was one of those who would vote for the Colonial Marriages Bill and thus remove that grievance. The present Bill bristled with enormous difficulties, and on previous occasions it had been interesting to notice the conflict of legal opinion on the one side and the other. He felt very strongly that the Bill would dislocate the family and social life of the country, and on these grounds he protested against it, and would do all in his power to prevent it passing into law.

*MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) supported the Second Reading because he regarded very seriously the transcendent importance of the sanctity of the marriage tie. The speeches in opposition to the Bill seemed all to rest on the assumption that the measure was intended to make marriage with a deceased wife's sister, not permissible, but compulsory. The apparent indifference, as shown by the members present that afternoon, to which reference had been made, was due to the fact that a similar Bill had been successful on seventeen occasions in the division lobby; therefore it was no wonder if Members assumed it would again pass its Second Reading. It was an extraordinary fact that with regard to this social and moral issue, Members of both political Parties, who invariably acted in obedience to the dictates of conscience, found themselves at variance, although some of the greatest Englishmen, Churchmen, scholars, and divines had exprienced no difficulty in approving of these marriages. There was no doubt as to the absolute sincerity of those who opposed the Bill. Its supporters claimed an equal admission of their sincerity and conscientiousness in believing the present state of the law to be entirely subversive of social purity and morality. Lord Grimthorpe, one of the earliest and most capable writers on the subject, described the position with regard to these marriages as one which had been foisted into the law of England by two Bishops against the real consent of Parliament, and kept up by a singular combination of High Church and Puritanical intolerance. That seemed exactly to sum up the position.

In 1902 the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich based his opposition on high morals and the view of the Church. To which church did he refer? Certainly not to the Church Catholic, the household of faith, the whole body of Christian believers in the world. The noble Lord could not even claim that his view was that of the entire Church of England. Then there were 250,000,000 Roman Catholics who did not regard such marriages as a sin; there were also the Protestant Nonconformists and devout Jews, in the aggregate outnumbering the whole of the Anglican Church, who regarded these marriages with approval rather than disapproval, and for the most part raised, no ecclesiastical barriers; and reference might also be made to the Greek Church in Russia and to the Anglican Churches in America and the British Colonies, all of which permit them. In the Anglican Church in England and in the sister church in America entirely antagonistic canons on this question existed; while in Australia the Anglican Church had recently formally authorised these marriages as being in accordance with the law of God and the teaching of the Church as rightly understood. The teaching of the Articles of the English Anglican Church was that nothing should be enforced in the face of the precept and doctrine of Holy Scripture, and there was nothing in either Old or New Testament which gave any shadow of foundation to the claim that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was definitely forbidden. That was the opinion of some of the greatest divines, scholars, and commentators of the Church of England itself, and in support of this statement he would refer to the Speaker's Commentary and to the Commentary known as that of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, expositions which were the product of the highest learning in this country. Why should the law of the Church be set up as opposing these marriages? He had always been taught that when the shadow of the Church fell between the Church and the Church's founder, the man who allowed that shadow so to fall as lapsing into the very state of religious bondage and servitude from which Jesus Christ came into this world to release him. Were the Anglican Churches of America and Australia, with their Bishops, divines, and clergy, inspired with an inferior morality, or living less pure lives than the members of the Church of England in this country who opposed this Bill? The true explanation was that in these newer countries the heads of the Church were not cribbed, cabined, and confined by the narrowing medieval ideas which possessed many in this country, and consequently they sought to lift Christian truth above prejudice and mere ecclesiastical formulas and to awake the nobler because the freer Christian life. The prohibition of these marriages was originally based upon regal exigencies and ducal successions, and he had always felt that it was entirely unworthy of the keen and close reasoning powers of the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich, as to whose sincerity of conviction and nobility of purpose there could be no question, that he should again and again seem to suppress his reasoning faculties in order to champion the present condition of the law.

Why should these marriages be dangerous in the charmed circle of the British Isles but not in other parts of the world? He agreed that it was highly undesirable that there should be one law for the Church and another for the State. That was a pernicious arrangement, but it would not be permanent. Wherever it had been the case hitherto, as was the case recently indeed in Australia, the Church had ultimately come into harmony with the State, and admitted that it had been in error in continuing to forbid these marriages. There was no word of Jesus Christ or of his apostles forbidding these marriages, and whilst the supporters of this Bill respected its opponents and the motives which prompted them, they felt bound to repudiate the illogical conclusions to which they came. To do otherwise would be to belie reason, to defy conscience, and to palter with the principles of liberty. Why should the sincere beliefs of the minority in Parliament and the minority of Christians and citizens in the country be allowed any longer to override those of the vast majority of the people? The great Nonconformist Churches were unanimously in favour of the measure. Why should the minority of one Church, especially when that Church was specially protected in the Bill, rule any longer? The noble Lord himself had consented to a measure legalising colonial marriages, thereby admitting the rights of the majority in the Colonies, and yet he refused the same rights to the majority in this country. For thirty years this measure had passed again and again its Second Reading, and had failed to reach the Statute-book only because no Administration had seen fit to make it a Government measure. In the United States, France, Germany, and Switzerland what was at first allowed only in certain cantons, States, or counties, was now permitted throughout the whole of the country; in this country alone were the people still hampered by the intrusion of dynastic and ecclesiastical forces? Henry VIII. forced Parliament to aid him to marry Anne Boleyn by declaring his marriage with Katherine of Arragon (his deceased brother's widow) void; then the Parliament of her daughter Queen Mary declared that same marriage to be holy and good before God and man. Then for Queen Elizabeth's sake Archbishop Parker again made that marriage unholy and void! Family life had not suffered in the countries to which he had referred, nor had any other evils followed upon the legalisation of these marriages; why, then, should evil consequences be anticipated in this country, which we believed to be animated by the best and highest moral forces and ideals in the world? The law as it stood did not prevent these marriages; the people married, or, if they did not, a worse condition of affairs often prevailed. In his practice as a lawyer he had often seen how evilly the present system worked, and therefore, as a Member of this House, as a citizen, as a Nonconformist, and as a man who endeavoured to be actuated in all things by the rule of conscience, he sincerely trusted the House would give a Second Reading to the Bill and that it would be passed into law.

*Colonel WELBY (Taunton) said that this Bill seemed to reverse the old axiom that the lesser was included in the greater. Nobody could doubt that a deceased wife's aunt by marriage, a deceased wife's daughter-in-law, and a deceased wife's niece, were farther away from and therefore lesser in degree of affinity to a man than his deceased wife's sister, and yet they were not included in this Bill. Why was that? The only reason possible was that a sentiment existed in regard to a deceased wife's sister which did not exist in regard to the other relations. Moreover, why should the supposed injustice apply only to the one sex? Why should not a widow be enabled to marry her deceased husband's brother? The hon. Member for St. Albans had referred to the fact that there was no Biblical teaching against marriage with a deceased wife's sister. But in the later history of the Jewish race it was unquestionably the fact that a widow not only might but was compelled to marry her deceased husband's brother. Why, then, was not the hon. Member in favour of extending to the female sex that which he considered so essential for the male sex?

It was said that this Bill would assimilate the law in the mother country to the law in the Colonies. But in South Australia it was permissible for a man to marry his deceased wife's niece. In what way would this Bill assimilate the law of England to the law of the Colonies in that respect? While many Colonies permitted marriage with a deceased wife's sister, several others did not, and why should the law in this country be assimilated to the law in some Colonies and not in others? The South African Colonies had not this law: Canada had it, but Newfoundland had not; in the West Indies, Barbadoes was the only colony in which such marriages were permitted. Why should they accept everything which the Colonies did in regard to legislation? Were not the conditions of colonial life very different from what they were in this country? What might be a good law in one of our Colonies might be totally unsuited for the mother country. Hon. Members opposite knew very well that the law of Scotland with regard to marriages was different to the rest of the United Kingdom, children born before marriage being able to inherit entailed property, yet they did not seek to make these laws alike. From a practical point of view, there was really nothing whatever in the colonial argument. There were a great many of our Colonies which did not permit these marriages, and why should we assimilate the marriage laws of this country to one group of Colonies and not to another? And if we were going to assimilate those laws, why not begin at home and assimilate the laws of Scotland to those of England and Wales? What was the hardship complained of in regard to the Colonies? It was simply that if there was a colonial marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister, and there were children of that marriage, the only property which those children could not inherit was entailed property. Of course they could inherit the real and personal property of their parents, but because a man did not take the trouble to make a will were they to alter the whole of the law of this country simply because some individual was idle or superstitious.

When they came to look at this matter from a practical point of view it was a very small matter indeed. It had been said that this reform was demanded by thousands and tens of thousands of people in this country. As far as he was concerned he had never received a single representation from a poor person with regard to the inequality or the unfairness of the law in this respect, and the only representations he had ever had either from Poplar where he was candidate for six years or his present constituency were from those people who were comfortably off. His contention was that this being a movement coming more from the rich than from the poor, it could be argued from the standpoint of the well-to-do; he had personally known cases of the deceased wife's sister coming to manage the home of her brother-in-law and thus bridging over the most terrible time in a man's life. He held that if they were to pass this Bill unquestionably it would prevent such an advantage as a deceased wife's sister coming to manage the home of her brother-in-law during that time, and it would alter all the relations of a man towards his wife's sister. Why should they not be able to receive their wife's sister as their own sister? They should respect her with the same high sanctity as their own sister, and put all questions of marriage on one side. Surely in this respect this Bill would remove a very beautiful aspect of modern life in this country.

He also looked upon this question from a spiritual point of view. It had been said that there was no argument to be derived from the Bible in favour of the present marriage laws. The Bible taught that they possessed a spiritual being, and in marriage there was a spiritual union with another spiritual being. Was not Christianity itself a spiritual kingdom which was in this world but not of it? Surely the world was not so full of spiritual ideas that they could afford to sacrifice any of them for what was, after all, simply a matter of convenience. He appealed to the House to respect that spirituality, and affirm that there was a higher law in this matter than the law of earth.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) said that before the House proceeded to a division he desired to submit a few points which might assist hon. Members in arriving at a judgment upon this Bill. This Bill was now presented to them in some respects in a different form to that which it took upon a former occasion. They were often told that their discussions were fruitless, but he observed that some of their criticisms in regard to this question had borne fruit, though others, not less strong and valid, seemed to have been ignored. Even in its amended form he was sure the Bill would lead to a considerable amount of legal difficulty and confusion. It must be very clear to every one who remembered the discussions in Grand Committee that the most intricate legal questions were involved, and that this Bill created a great multiplicity of legal obstacles. An Amendment was carried when the Bill was in Grand Committee dealing with a certain difficulty which was raised. As had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Tunbridge, that difficulty was that a hard case had not been completely met in this Bill. The Bill proposed that where a man had married his deceased wife's sister, and the parties had afterwards parted, they should have a right to reconsider their position. It was quite true that the Bill said, as it did not say when it left the Grand Committee, that this choice was only to apply where people had ceased to live together. But the decision of the question of whether they had ceased to live together or not was one of great difficulty, their legal position would be open to doubt, and a very confused condition of things would be produced. There was a much more considerable legal difficulty. It had often happened that a marriage which had been technically irregular had been validified by a subsequent Act. But those Acts had always been applied to marriages which were believed to be regular at the time. This Bill, on the contrary, was intended to apply to marriages which the parties knew at the time were irregular. By Clause 3 persons were to be made married on the day that the Royal Assent was given to this Bill. So far as he could see, this applied not only to every living person, but also to every dead person. A person who married his deceased wife's sister sixty years ago, and had died leaving a will, although in the law he had not been married, would be made married when the Royal Assent was given to this Bill. Thereupon, according to well-known doctrines of law, his will would become waste-paper, because marriage invalidatde a will made beforehand. The rights of every person who benefited under that will would be prejudicially affected. That showed the extreme difficulty of this sort of retrospective legislation. They could not make a thing good *ex post facto*. They could not make good what was well known at the time to be an irregularity. The promoters of the Bill would be well advised to drop that part of their proposal.

But the objections of the opponents of the Bill were of a graver character. His hon. and learned friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill said he conceived it to involve no violation of divine law. He cordially believed that his hon.

and gallant friend was representing his sincere thoughts in saying so. But he was a little amused at the authorities he quoted in support of his position. His hon. and learned friend the Member for Stretford was the first orthodox Catholic father who was quoted. The second, stranger still, was the Treasury. He had never supposed that the authority of the Treasury would be quoted in order to establish a proposition in divinity. He did not conceal from the House that it was very difficult to discuss this matter in the House of Commons tone. He protested against the discussion of this subject in the odds and ends of Parliamentary time as though it were a small matter. It would be more satisfactory to have the whole marriage law refounded on a new policy, after a full inquiry. They were justified in opposing this Bill because they believed it would transgress the fundamental laws of the morality to which they adhered. He did not wish to reflect on the characters of individuals who had contracted these marriages and who had done what he did not approve of. But while it was not their business to condemn individuals it was their business to form a definite opinion upon the character of the act. In opposing this Bill they were taking up a particular moral attitude towards certain acts. He was obliged to say that the relations which it was sought in this Bill to legalise seemed to him to be fundamentally immoral relations. What would Nonconformists say if a Bill were brought in by a private Member for the State regulation of vice? They would feel something like indignation if a Bill that seemed to them to outrage their moral conceptions was passed through a sparsely attended House without due consideration. The opponents of this Bill believed that it went to the root of the moral system to which they adhered. They believed, as his hon. and gallant friend had said, that the relations of the sexes were essentially a spiritual matter, and to survey them in their natural aspect was to miss what lay at the root of all moral questions, and reduced the whole conception of purity to nonsense. They rejected any relation of the sexes as immoral that fell short of marriage. It was only possible to justify the doctrine that marriage was the only legitimate relation between the sexes on the principle that that relationship was essentially spiritual.

The history of the matter could be stated in a few words. In the first fourteen centuries of Christian history there would be no doubt that these marriages were deemed unlawful. How unlawful was shown in the episode of the divorce of Henry VIII. He consulted the Universities of all Christendom, and they all held that such marriages were not lawful, and that the Pope could not dispense with that obligation. That showed how deeply the general feeling of learned Christians was against the dispensation of the law in respect of such marriages. There was no systematic dispensation given until the reign of Pope Alexander VI., who certainly was not a Pope from whom Protestants would seek to receive their moral guidance. But it was the very essence of the Protestant position to deny that it lay with the ecclesiastical authority to alter the principles of morality. Morality was altogether above the region of ecclesiastical authority; and to suggest that ecclesiastical authority could alter in any degree the fixed boundary line between right and wrong was, in their view, to introduce the worst of the usurpations against which our ancestors rebelled. Then the authority of the Scottish Presbyterian Church was against the Bill; and the whole of the Oriental Churches were emphatically against it also. What was the authority on the other side? Was there any other authority than that of the people who had contracted these marriages? Was it really to be said that the idiosyncrasy of a few individuals should be made the rule of law, and the means of breaking asunder the Church and State?

This proposed change, which was supported by no weight of authority, was fundamentally antagonistic to the Established Church of the country. While he honoured the devotion which Nonconformists showed to their moral standard, he was surprised that they very often seemed to think that other churches had no moral standard to which they were equally devoted. He did not see why, in resisting such a law, they should be regarded as fanatical, whilst Nonconformists should be looked upon as suffering for conscience' sake. He thought it was unreasonable, and Nonconformists ought to recognise that those who were opposing this Bill were just as devoted to their opinions as they were. It was no exaggeration to say that the preponderating opinion of the Church of England was that this proposal would introduce a serious social disunion, from which even an enlightened Pagan would certainly shrink. Was it reasonable to violate the existing system, to introduce the sword of division into every parish where strong Church opinions were held, in order to relieve a difficulty which confessedly was felt by only a very few people, while at the same time, as had been very well pointed out, it would impose a difficulty on a great many other people who were perfectly satisfied with the existing state of things, and had, in fact, adjusted their family arrangements accordingly?

He respected Nonconformist feeling on the question very deeply. He appealed to Nonconformists to see who were their friends and who were their foes. They well knew the danger of a great attack

Lord Hugh Cecil.

upon the principles of Christian morality. They were alarmed at such attacks. He believed that such an attack was going to be the great event of ensuing years. Christianity had long been undermined as a theological system, but still, through the habit and custom of society and the weight of public opinion, the moral authority of Christianity had not been impaired. They could read in many magazines well written, ingenious, and, from the point of view of the supporters of this Bill, unanswerable arguments against the whole system of the marriage law. There were those who desired to reform the marriage laws. They had invented a new word to describe their theory. They called it the science of "eugenics." The whole aim was to bring healthy children into the world, and all the spiritual aspects of the case were to be put on one side. Did Nonconformists really suppose that, if they yielded to this movement, they would be able to restrain it within the narrow limits of this Bill? Did they suppose that they would be able to uphold that moral system for which they had contended so zealously? Materialism was threatening the whole fabric of Christian belief, and it was for Christians to stand together against its attacks. He believed it would be unwise for Parliament to pass this Bill. It would be unwise because it would loosen the fabric of society; it would be unwise because it would suggest to everybody that the marriage law, like other laws, after a certain amount of agitation, might be altered; it would be unwise because it would suggest the possibility of setting up an entirely illogical system of marriage law; and most of all, it would be unwise because it would be the first departure from that system of Christian ethics which up to our own time, according to the law of the Church and the State, had regulated the ineffable and mysterious relations of the sexes.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 149; Noes, 64. (Division List No. 126.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Bright, Allan Heywood
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Cheetham, John Frederick
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Ellice, Capt. EC(SAndrw'sBghs.
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, SirFrancisH. (Maidstone
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hobhouse, RtHnH. (Somers't, E
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hozier, Hn. James HenryCecil
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Kennedy, VincentP. (Cavan, W)
Knowles, Sir Lees
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lundon, W.
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mooney, John J.
Moulton, John Fletcher
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Parrott, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spencer, Rt. HnC.R(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, A. (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters(NDorset
Wilson, FredW(Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Colonel Denny and Sir Brampton Gurdon.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Baird, John George Alexander
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Blundell, Colonel Henr
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duffy, William J.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzgerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest

Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gilhooly, James
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Greene,Sir EW(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
Malcolm, Ian
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Myers, William Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Reddy, M.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Vincent,Col.SirC.E.H (Sheffield
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E.(Taunt'n)
Wilson-Todd,SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Griffith-Boscawen and Sir Ernest Flower.

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c."—(*Colonel Denny*).

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said he felt great interest in the work of the Standing Committees because he was perfectly sure that the business of Parliament could not be fulfilled unless they adopted more or less the principle of devolution. Mr. Gladstone often spoke in that sense, and it was greatly owing to him that the Standing Committees were inaugurated. But the Bills sent to a Standing Committee must be of such a character as would permit of the Committee's dealing adequately with them. He was perfectly sure that if the House referred this Bill to a Standing Committee such a reference must end in disappointment and failure. No one would think of referring the question of Home Rule to a Standing Committee, but in the present case it was proposed to refer a Bill dealing with a question of great social importance to such a Committee. Many hon. Members believed that this Bill dealt with an important aspect of the social life of the people, and that it involved considerations for the discussion of which the procedure of a Standing Committee was not suitable. The Bill had already been before a Standing Committee, and after the time of the Committee had been wasted, disappointment and failure resulted. He ventured to say that this experience would be repeated if the Bill were sent to the Committee. This was one of the Bills which should be dealt with by Committee of the Whole House.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe), speaking as a supporter of the Bill, and as one who had had some experience of Standing Committees, said he was bound to tell the House that he did not think this was a suitable Bill to send to a Standing Committee. It must be evident from the discussion that the Bill was one which touched the deepest and strongest emotions of our nature.

*MR. TALBOT (Oxford University) also urged that the subjects dealt with by the Bill were of such grave importance that they could only be properly discussed on the floor of the House. He was a member of the Standing Committee to which the Bill was referred two years ago, and while the Bill was before the Committee serious inconsistencies were disclosed in the measure, involving not mere matters of sentiment, but matters on which the deepest possible feelings were aroused—matters of acute controversy which made it impossible to suppose that the measure could be treated as one of detail only. A number of the constituents whom he represented in this House might, he supposed, be rightly said to entertain more deeply-rooted objections to this Bill than the constituents of almost any other Member. In discussing the question whether the Bill should or should not be sent to a Standing Committee, they should consider the kind of work for which the Standing Committees were originally suggested. It would be remembered that Mr. Gladstone declared that only Bills which did not involve acute Party divisions should be submitted to these Committees. This was not a Bill which divided Members of the House on Party lines. No one who had listened to the debate that afternoon could fail to realise that it was a Bill which went down to the very roots of their convictions, and the convictions of a vast number of people outside the House. He knew it would be said in answer that it was only by sending the Bill to a Standing Committee that it could be passed into law. He could almost assume the *rôle* of prophet on this occasion and say that, looking at the state of the Order book, it was practically impossible that the Bill could advance to the stage which would enable its being passed in this House. This was not a matter to be decided by a Party vote.

MR. CHURCHILL (Oldham) hoped the House would not send this Bill to the Grand Committee. He remembered that last session the Government decided to send the Aliens Bill to a Grand Committee. He prophesied beforehand that such a course would be disastrous, and his prophesy was not altogether unjustified by the actual event. The truth was that the Grand Committees were not formed for, and, with their present procedure, were not capable of, dealing with measures which aroused great feeling and which involved large principles. They were intended to deal with measures about which there were no great controversial feelings, but which involved the consideration of a great quantity of complicated and, very often, petty detail, with which it was not proper or necessary to occupy the attention of the whole House. The Aliens Bill involved principles, excited passions, and was very complicated. In addition to that nearly all hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House thought it was a most unjustifiable thing for the Government who possessed all the time of the House to send such a measure to a Grand Committee. The result was not only disastrous to the measure, but disastrous to the procedure and *status* of the Grand Committees. The measure now before the House was one which excited even warmer feelings than the Aliens Bill. Of course, it would be easy to amend the practice and procedure of the Grand Committees; it would be easy to invent a drastic closure to be applied at every stage, and it would be possible to pass Bills through Grand Committees even more easily than through the House of Commons. Whether the House of Commons would consider that a proper practice or not he could not tell. The Grand Committees had absolutely no power to deal with obstruction. A minority of determined men could bring the proceedings of a Grand Committee to a standstill. They had done so frequently in the past, and they would do so in the future, whenever Bills of a highly complicated character were sent to a Grand Committtee. He was not sure that it would be a good thing to give the power of the closure to the Chairmen of Grand Committees; but it was perfectly certain that the only result of sending this Bill to a Grand Committee would lead to friction, and, moreover, the proceedings of the Grand Committee might be interrupted by a dissolution. He had always opposed controversial measures of this kind being sent to Grand Committees as constituted at present, and if it were undesirable in any year not to send such a Bill as this to a Grand Committee, it was still more undesirable this year when it was sure to lead to heated controversy when passing through that Committee.

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON said that when he had the honour of introducing this Bill four or five years ago, he referred it to a Committee of the Whole House. But since the new rules of procedure had been passed, every private Member's Bill had practically to go to a Grand Committee if there was to be any hope of proceeding with it. Therefore, while he agreed to a great extent with his hon. friend the Member for Rushcliffe, he felt that the ground had been cut entirely from under their feet by these new rules of procedure.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that the hon. Member opposite who advocated the sending of this Bill to a Grand Committee had entirely avoided the merits of the question. The new rules of procedure did not preclude the consideration of the merits of a Bill in Grand Committee. He had always voted for this Bill, and, in the interests of the Bill itself he thought it would be most unfortunate to send it to a Grand Committee. Did the hon. Gentleman believe that if this Bill were referred to the Grand Committee it would be passed this year? He was sure the hon. Member did not. There were serious constitutional objections to referring such a Bill as this to a Grand Committee, and he would point out to the House the great disadvantage of referring such a contentious and important Bill as this to a Grand Committee. Moreover, that procedure involved the loss of the Bill being considered by the Committee of the whole House. In his earlier Parliamentary days only the principles of a Bill were discussed on the Second Reading, while in Committee the discussions were on details to make the measure a workable one. There were always Members who were capable of pointing out defects in a Bill which had escaped the draftsman and even the Leaders of the House, and which would make the measure unworkable in practice. The only argument for referring this Bill to the Grand Committee was that it might pass this session, but no one believed that it would. Hon. Members knew perfectly well what was taking place in Grand Committee on the Trades Disputes Bill, and must admit that by referring this Bill to a Grand Committee the chances of its passing this year would not be improved. In Committee of the whole House a strenuous opponent of a measure got drowned in the common-sense of the House, but in a Grand Committee, with strong partisans present, all the passions for and against a Bill were accentuated, and the opponents and advocates of the Bill fought like cats and dogs. He was favourable to the Bill; but nevertheless he, for one, would vote against its reference to a Grand Committee.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln) said that the real objection to sending a Bill to the Grand Committee was where questions of principle arose on details; but in this case the whole question of principle arose on the Bill itself. He sat on a previous occasion on the Grand Committee on this Bill and heard hon. Members endeavouring to raise questions of principle apart from the details of the Bill itself. He regretted that his understanding was not capable of appreciating the reasons of the opposition to the Bill by the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich. The details of this Bill were purely of a legal kind, turning upon points with reference to property and settlements; and, therefore, he believed that it should be sent to a Grand Committee for quiet and reasonable discussion.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said he had always supported this Bill on previous occasions, and he regretted that, owing to the late sitting, he had not been able to attend earlier and support it again. The state of business in the Grand Committee on Law was such that there was not the slightest chance of this Bill passing this session were it sent to that Grand Committee. Besides, if it were sent to the Grand Committee it might stand in the way of other Bills being passed. Everyone knew that when a Bill of this sort went to a Grand Committee it was impossible to get it through when there was no power of the closure.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that the hon. Member for King's Lynn had argued that Grand Committees were unconstitutional; but these Committees existed, and that was enough for him. They knew perfectly well that this Bill could not come before a Committee of the Whole House. He admitted that there were difficulties in the way of sending the Bill to a Grand Committee, but he thought that the chances were better for the Bill passing if sent to a Grand Committee, than if it were remitted to a Committee of the whole House, considering that there was such a large majority in favour of the Bill.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said that he wished to associate himself with what had been said by the hon. Member for Rushcliffe. He had long felt how extremely difficult was the classification of Bills, according as they were fitted or not fitted to be sent to a Grand Committee. Here was an instance to prove how very necessary it was that the House should not adopt a rule-of-thumb method of classifying Bills. The Bill was supported in the House by a majority of nearly two to one, yet in Grand Committee last year it occupied a period of nine days spread over six weeks of Parliamentary time. He had been struck by the extreme gravity of the questions raised by the Amendments moved in that Committee. They were questions of the most far-reaching character affecting the rights of property and raising questions of morality. He entreated the House, before sending this Bill to a Grand Committee, to reflect on the awful waste of time which resulted from compelling them to meet from day to day to discuss a Bill which could give no kind of result.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he had always voted strongly in favour of the Bill; but everybody must recognise that it was a Bill which had powerful opponents as well as strong supporters;

and, therefore, it became necessary to have the discussion of the details in Committee of the whole House. He hoped that his hon. friends would not press its reference to the Grand Committee upstairs.

Major JAMESON (Clare, W.) said he thought a Grand Committee was the very worst Committee for such a Bill. He thought that if the House were to consider the question for a moment they would realise that it would be a strange anomaly to send a Bill to authorise breaking the law to the Grand Committee on Law. He wished to move to omit the words "Grand Committee" in order to insert the words "Select Committee."

Mr. Joseph Devlin rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. and gallant Member appears to me to be speaking somewhat against time. The Question is that this Bill be committed to the Grand Committee on Law.

A Division being called,

Major JAMESON, amid loud cries of "Order, order," addressed the Chair seated and with his hat on, and was understood to challenge Mr. Speaker's ruling.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: I have told the hon. and gallant Member that in my opinion the Motion he proposed to make was an abuse of the rules of the House, and I am entitled to form my own judgment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 149; Noes, 84. (Division List No. 127.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Benn, John Williams
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Burke, L. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Cheetham, John Frederick
Coddington, Sir William
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M.Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Ellice,CaptEC.(S.And'wsB'ghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans,Sir FrancisH(Maidstone
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gore, Hon. Sir F. Ormsby-
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B
Harcourt, Lewis
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford,W.)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hobhouse,RtHnH.(Somers't,E
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hornby, Sir Wm. Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hozier, Hon.James Henry Cecil
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kennedy,Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Knowles, Sir Lees
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas

Mr. Cohen.

MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W F
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mooney, John J.
Moore, William
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendall (Tipperary, M.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pryce-Jones, Lt. Col Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Chas. Hilton (Lincoln)
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur W. (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Colonel Denny and Sir Brampton Gurdon.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allsopp, Hon. George
Baird, John George Alexander
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.)
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Duffy, William J.
Fergusson, Rt, Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Ffrench, Peter
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gilhooly, James
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry. S. Edm
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Joyce, Michael
Kenyon, Hn. G. T. (Denbigh)
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Kean, John
Malcolm, Ian
Milvain, Thomas
Myers, William Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharpe
Power, Patrick Joseph
Purvis, Robert
Reddy, M.
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ)
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Charles Renshaw and Mr. M'Kenna.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill now be read a second time."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) objected to the Bill passing its Second Reading without a word of explanation. Half the Bills that passed through their First Reading were presented at the Table without a word from their introducers, and he certainly thought when it came to the Second Reading some explanation should be given by the Member in charge of the Bill as to the reasons why it should be allowed to pass.

*MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) said that, if the House would give the Bill its Second Reading, he proposed to ask that it might be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, where it would, of course, be examined in detail. The object of the Bill was to protect a sober husband against a drunken wife and a sober wife against a drunken husband.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said if the husband was a confirmed drunkard this Bill prevented him from selling his wife's sewing machine, and if the wife was a confirmed drunkard it prevented her from selling her husband's tools.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

COAL MINES EMPLOYMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee; Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) asked whether the Secretary of State for India could give the House any further information than that which had appeared in the Press as to the serious disaster in India; whether he could say what was the ascertained loss of life up to the present, and what steps the Government were taking to assist those in the afflicted area.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said he had no information with reference to the earthquake in India beyond that contained in the Viceroy's telegram which was published in that morning's newspapers. He had telegraphed to the Viceroy for further information. He feared there was no doubt that the catastrophe, at Dharmsala especially, was very serious. The fact that the Indian authorities had not been able to communicate freely with us showed, he feared, that the interruption of communications in India had been such as to prevent their obtaining authentic details. He would communicate to the Press any further information that might be obtained. All possible efforts with regard to relief would be used by the Indian Government.

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 10*th April*, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to dissolve the marriage of Jane Sarah Victoria Lautour, of Ansty House, Erdington, in the county of Warwick, with Ernest Lautour, her husband, and to enable her to marry again, and for other purposes. Presented (on Petition), and a copy of the proceedings in and of the Decree of Divorce of the King's Bench, Matrimonial Division, of the High Court of Justice in Ireland. Delivered (on oath). Bill read 1^a.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Petition of Jane Sarah Victoria Lautour, praying that substituted service of a copy of the Bill, and of the Order for the Second Reading thereof, and of all other Orders connected therewith, be made upon Mr. Frank W. Faulkner, of 7, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, solicitor; read. Ordered, That the said Petition be considered to-morrow.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Accrington Corporation; Accrington District Gas and Water Board; South Suburban Gas; Wrexham Gas. The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Sheffield University Bill [H.L.]. Committee to meet To-morrow.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. A witness to attend on the hearing of the Petition for substituted service.

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [H.L.]; Clacton Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Truro Water Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.]. The Earl of Camperdown, Chairman of the Select Committee, informed the House, That the Lord Romilly was unable, on account of illness, to continue his attendance on Thursday and Friday last and this day, and that the Committee continued sitting on those days in the absence of the Lord Romilly, all parties having consented thereto; read, and agreed to.

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Yarborough be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee in the place of the Lord Castlemaine; read, and agreed to.

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.]; East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Charing Cross and Strand Electricity Supply Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow.

City of London Electric Lighting Company Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Various Powers) Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Central Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; County of London Electric Supply Company Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3338. Italy (Finances).

INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL COMMITTEE.

Report of the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GAS COMPANIES (METROPOLIS).

Accounts of the Metropolitan gas companies for the year 1904.

POLLING DISTRICTS (CITY OF MANCHESTER).

Order made by the council of the city of Manchester dividing the Parliamentary borough of Manchester into polling districts.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury minute, dated 4th April, 1905, granting a retired allowance to William H. Wood, Engineer-in-Chief's Department, General Post Office, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS (REGISTRATION OF PATENT AGENTS) BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

THE EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA.

LORD REAY: I wish to ask the noble Marquess the Under-Secretary of State for India a Question of which I have given him private notice, namely, whether he has any further information to give the House with regard to the terrible calamity which has befallen India.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Marquess of BATH): My Lords, the names of those who, up to this morning, are reported by the Government of India to have been killed or injured have been communicated to the Press; but it is feared that the list is still incomplete. The Secretary of State has received the following particulars from the Government of India in a telegram dated 9th inst.—

> "From Viceroy, April 9th, 1905.—In Lahore, twenty-five natives killed and considerable damage done to private and public property; in Amritsar, Golden Temple damaged and some lives lost; at Tarn Taran, nine killed and seven severely injured. At Dalhousie, damage to property, but no deaths. Palampur, in Kangra district, reported totally destroyed, and many hundred lives lost. Very serious damage also reported in Kangra and Jowala, Mukhi and other villages in Kangra Valley. Every building, without exception, in Kangra and Bhawan in ruins, including Sessions House and Mission buildings. The Kangra treasury has collapsed and treasure boxes lying under *débris*. Of police, only Deputy-Inspector of Police, one sergeant, and one constable uninjured, and three other constables alive, but injured. Of Tahsil Establishment only office kanungo and two chaprassies, of whom one is uninjured, are alive. Total number estimated to be alive is 500. Many people still alive are imprisoned in ruined houses. Similar state of affairs in most other villages in the neighbourhood. At Dharmsala, all houses and buildings throughout the entire station, including cantonment and bazaars, have been totally destroyed, with enormous loss of life."

The mortality among natives is not yet known, but the following casualties among native troops have been reported—

> "Killed, 140 (including women, children, and followers); injured, 186; missing, 71. Relief party, with doctors, medicine, food, and tents, sent from Lahore on April 5th. A double company of 34th Pioneers also left Mian Mir on April 7th to render assistance at Dharmsala, Palampur, Kangra and other places in Kangra Valley. Two more companies are being sent and two or three Pioneer companies are being sent from Umballa. Military authorities have been asked to hold other forces in readiness to send if necessary. An Assistant District Superintendent of Police with 200 constables are being sent to protect property and to take place of constables killed. No further information at present."

This morning the Viceroy telegraphs as follows—

> "Latest information from Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab does not add to details already wired. It is clear that towns of Dharmsala, Kangra, and Palampur are virtually destroyed, that loss of life has been very great, and that full measure of catastrophe, owing to difficulty of communication, cannot be ascertained for some time. I have only desisted from proceeding at once to scene of disaster at urgent request of Lieutenant-Governor, who will go there himself."

In reply to an inquiry from the Secretary of State as to the desirability of opening a relief fund, the Viceroy adds—

> "I am starting Indian subscription list for sufferers whose losses it will be impossible to meet from other sources, and in a day or two, when fuller information has reached me, I hope to be able to tell you whether we should also appeal to wider circle. I think that this may be necessary.
>
> "Commissioner further reports that at Dharmsala, owing to splendid work of Ghurkhas and others, nearly all bodies have already been exhumed. Special party been despatched to visit all tea estates round Palampur, and similar parties in other directions. Police report from Kulu shows some loss of life there, but no European casualties reported. In Kangra nearly all Government native clerks have perished."

I am certain there can be only one feeling in your Lordships' House with regard to the terrible calamity which has overtaken India.

THE BALLASTING OF MERCHANT SHIPS.

LORD MUSKERRY rose to call attention to the loss of the "Eulomene," proceeding across the North Sea in ballast, and to the accident to the "County of Anglesea," which, on a passage from Rouen to Liverpool in ballast, was towed into Portland Roads on her beam ends; to ask whether it is intended to hold formal investigations in the cases of the two vessels named; and, further, to ask whether the Board of Trade are now intending to take the necessary steps towards enforcing the recommendations of the Light Load-line Committee. He said:—My Lords, we have to deplore the loss of another British ship sailing in ballast, together with the whole of her crew; and we cannot but feel sincere pity for the misery and sorrow which have been caused to the bereaved relatives and friends. Your Lordships know that I have taken some interest in this subject of the proper ballasting of merchant ships.

I do not wish to prejudice the case of the "Eulomene" in the slightest, or to say one single word which would reflect on her owners. It is due as much to them as to the public that a thorough investigation should be held. What it is requisite we should know of fully is, what amount of ballast she carried, and whether, if loose ballast, it was protected by shifting boards, which the Light Load-line Committee of your Lordships' House recommended should be enforced by the Board of Trade. Also, it would seem that this vessel's manning would need enquiry, more particularly as, besides the captain, she appeared to have one certificated officer only; whilst, so far as can be judged from their names, the fourteen men in the forecastle were all foreigners. I gather that no question is raised as to the accuracy of these latter points.

The case of the other vessel, the "County of Anglesea," was fortunately not so serious as that of the "Eulomene," but it is serious enough, in view of the recommendations of the Light Load-line Committee, to require a thorough investigation. This vessel was proceeding in ballast from the Continent to Liverpool. She was sighted four miles South West of Portland Bill on February 26th last, on her beam ends, a position which, as your Lordships know, is one of imminent peril. The vessel was flying signals of distress, and three of her crew were in the rigging. According to the reports, a steamer went to her assistance, but apparently could do nothing on account of the heavy seas, and finally she left her and returned to harbour. H.M.S. "Scylla" then proceeded to the vessel and found her with her ensign reversed, which is, of course, a signal of distress. The "Scylla" thereupon despatched a life-boat to her. Ultimately, two tugs proceeded to the rescue and succeded in getting her in tow, when she was towed into Portland. The report which came from there was that the ballast shifted and she was thrown on her beam ends by heavy seas six miles South West of Portland Bill. I hope for your Lordships' careful notice of this disaster, which might easily have resulted in the loss of both ship and crew, in view of the fact that the Select Committee of your Lordships' House on the Light Load-line recommended that regulations as to securing loose ballast should be drawn up and enforced, and at the same time they deprecated strongly the practice of throwing ballast overboard before a vessel arrived at her destination.

In July of last year, I had the honour to bring forward a Motion that, in the opinion of this House, His Majesty's

Government should at once take the necessary steps in enforcing the recommendations of the Committee. The noble Earl who was Chairman of the Committee, Lord Spencer, in speaking on my Resolution, concluded by saying that, with a hope that the Board of Trade would act more vigorously in support of the recommendations of the Committee, he did not think the Resolution should be pressed to a division. Further, the noble Marquess the Leader of this House, Lord Lansdowne, concluded his remarks by stating that by my having called attention to the subject and eliciting from the Board of Trade a distinct statement that the matter was one of which they were not losing sight, he hoped I would be content with the discussion and not press the Motion to a division. In deference to the views of the two noble Lords I withdrew my Motion. When, however, I see recurring disasters to vessels in ballast, due to its shifting and otherwise, I trust you will think it is perfectly justifiable on my part to bring the cases before your Lordships' House. As it appears that the ballast shifted on board the "County of Anglesea," what is necessary is a strict investigation as to the cause of this shifting and as to whether any precautions have been adopted against it in the manner recommended by the Light Load-line Committee. There are already regulations laid down to prevent the shifting of cargoes of grain. It is not necessary for me to dwell upon the serious dangers of either cargo or ballast shifting. If we require grain cargoes to be properly secured from shifting it is only logical to say that similar requirements should be enforced in the case of vessels sailing with loose ballast. I hope to hear that the Board of Trade will now give their earnest attention to the disasters I have named, and to the necessity of acting upon the recommendations of the Light Load-line Committee, which are, it seems to me, imperative.

Lord WOLVERTON: My Lords, before answering my noble friend's Questions, which are three in number, I have to express regret at the absence of my noble friend Lord Salisbury, who is unavoidably prevented from being in his place to-day to reply to the Questions on the Paper. With regard to the first two Questions, I have great pleasure in informing my noble friend that the President of the Board of Trade has ordered an inquiry into both cases, which are, therefore, *sub judice*. In view of that fact I am sure your Lordships will not expect me to enter into them. They will be thrashed out by a competent tribunal, and the Report of that tribunal, when it is received will be published and will be accessible to my noble friend. In the latter part of his notice my noble friend again refers to the recommendations of the Light Load-line Committee. The concluding clause of the Committee's Report was as follows—

> "The Committee, therefore, confidently rely upon the Board of Trade to use the powers already conferred upon them by Parliament to prevent the improper or insufficient ballasting of ships. It will be the duty of the Board to apply at once to Parliament if at any future date they consider any extension of their power necessary in the public interest."

That recommendation was immediately taken up by the Board of Trade, who issued a warning setting out the recommendation, and proceeding,—

> "In view of these recommendations the Board of Trade desire to call the particular attention of principal and detaining officers and surveyors to the instuctions already issued respecting the improper ballasting of ships, and (in the absence of any statutory authority to draw up and enforce precise regulations on the subject of ballasting) the Department wish to strongly emphasise the necessity for the survey staff exercising an active supervision not only over vessels on the point of sailing in ballast, but also over vessels taking in ballast of such a nature as may require exceptionally careful stowage and may be liable to the danger of shifting when the vessels are at sea."

Nothing has occurred since then to alter the opinion of the Board of Trade that under the existing provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act they are able to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee. If the time should come when they require statutory powers they will immediately appeal to this House, and to the other House of Parliament, to obtain them. I am instructed to say that at the present moment the Board of Trade are quite satisfied with the law as it stands, and do not propose to apply for any further powers.

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, it is satisfactory to learn, at all events, that inquiries are to be made in the two cases which my noble friend has brought before the House, and a great deal will depend, I think, on the outcomes of those inquiries. My noble friend who has just spoken was a member of the Light Load-line Committee, and fully agreed, I believe, with all our recommendations.

LORD WOLVERTON: Hear, hear!

EARL SPENCER: And the noble Lord will, I have no doubt, take care that the Board of Trade are kept alive to the necessity of seeing that the recommendations of the Committee are carried out, and that Board of Trade regulations are made with regard to the ballasting of ships at sea. It is a very important matter, and the noble Lord opposite does quite right in bringing cases of this sort forward if there is the slightest fear that the accidents to these ships are in any way due to the neglect of the precautions which the Committee thought necessary and pressed on the Board of Trade to adopt. When the Report is issued we shall be able to judge whether any further pressure should be brought on the Board of Trade, either to carry out the existing regulations more strictly or to ask for a strengthening of the law.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS (REGISTRATION OF PATENT AGENTS) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, perhaps it would be useful if I make a short statement with regard to its object. It is an amendment and extension of the Act of 1888. The Act of 1888 was the result of a Commission appointed by the Board of Trade in 1885 to consider the question of the position of patent agents. They recommended that a register should be instituted, and that persons should not be allowed to advertise themselves or to put themselves forward as acting as patent agents unless they were placed on a register in accordance with rules to be drawn up by the Board of Trade. Those rules were drawn up in 1889, and they are the rules which are in force at the present time. Since then grave mischief has been occasioned by the fact that persons have been in the habit of advertising themselves under various headings which are misleading, and have thereby induced innocent and unwary inventors to believe that they are registered as patent agents. The Board of Trade had their attention called to the mischief, and the result was that in the year 1894 a Bill was brought in to remedy this defect. That Bill contained a clause in all substantial matters identical with the substantive clause in my Bill. That Bill was referred to a Committee and the Committee passed the clause which I am now desirous of placing on the Statute-book, but owing to the general election in 1894 the matter went no further and was abandoned. I desire in this Bill to throw my net wider, if I can, and to embrace those persons who, under synonyms of patent agents, practise in this country without being registered, and without being qualified. Again and again the Board of Trade have held inquiries into the conduct of persons who have been on the register. Those inquiries have resulted in the Board of Trade striking them off the register for disgraceful professional conduct; but, notwithstanding, these very persons have continued to practise, to all intents and purposes, as patent agents deceiving unwary inventors by the use of one or other of the appellations I desire to prevent them using in the future under this Bill. I am told that there are some persons who are innocently using these appellations in the ordinary way of their trade, and they think it is unfair that they should be prevented from doing so in future. I am willing in Committee to add a clause, which I have drafted and shown to the President of the Board of Trade, saving all present rights, and in that way following the precedent which was set in the year 1888, when all existing rights or vested interests were at that time saved. That, I think, would prevent objections which have been entertained in some quarters to the Bill; and I hope that the Bill, with that Amendment which I am prepared to move in Committee, may meet with the sanction and approval of the Board of Trade. I may say that the great mass of patents that are registered in this country are registered by properly registered patent agents. I do not wish to prevent any individual acting as agent for another, but I do wish to prevent them holding themselves out as patent agents under synonyms such as patent expert, inventor's agent, and so on, which really mean to the public the same thing as a patent agent. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Coleridge.*)

Lord WOLVERTON: My Lords, I have again to regret the absence of my noble friend the President of the Board of Trade. The noble and learned Lord opposite has clearly explained his Bill to the House, and I do not propose, on behalf of the Government or the Board of Trade, to offer any opposition to the Second Reading. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage the Board of Trade may have to introduce some Amendments, but they will be Amendments which, judging from the remarks that have just fallen from the noble and learned Lord, will meet with his approval.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

COLONIAL GOVERNORS.

Lord MONK BRETTON: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government will consider the appointment of officials of the Colonial Office to serve on the staffs of the Governors of self-governing Colonies. In rising to ask this Question I must frankly confess that I do so less with the object of drawing information from His Majesty's Government than in order to make a suggestion to them on a subject which I believe to be of considerable importance. When His Majesty the King appoints a Governor to one of the self-governing Colonies, the Secretary of State usually selects a gentleman who has had no previous experience of that colony, and rightly, because the incoming Governor lands in the colony unprejudiced as regards Party and able to take a neutral attitude. In the same way the staff which the Governor brings out with him to the colony are new to the colony, and, therefore, for some little time at any rate, after the arrival of a new Governor, the Secretary of State for the Colonies at home receives no reliable information with regard to affairs generally in that colony.

I know it may be contended that the Governor of a colony is the paid servant of that colony, and that he is in a sense the mouthpiece of the Ministry of the day in the colony. I venture to say that such a view overlooks the fact that the Governor of a colony is the representative of His Majesty the King, and that it is his duty to keep His Majesty and His Majesty's Secretary of State informed of what is going on in His Majesty's dominions, and therefore I cannot think that it can be contended that it is not his duty to give information to the Secretary of State. Indeed, my Lords, I do not think anyone who has read the history of the American Rebellion can deny that it is of importance that the Secretary of State should receive accurate information with regard to what is going on in the self-governing Colonies; and if he is not to receive such information, what is the position of His Majesty's Government with regard to the self-governing Colonies? They would be worse informed about a colony like Australia than they would be about a country like Japan. In Japan His Majesty's Government have a Minister and a staff of officials to give them information, but in a self-governing colony, if they cannot rely on the Governor, they have nobody at all. I would appeal to those of your Lordships who have been Governors in self-governing Colonies to confirm me when I say that a Governor can be consistently loyal to his own Government, and at the same time furnish information to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with regard to the general affairs taking place in the colony.

When the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs appoints an ambassador to, we will say, France, that ambassador goes to Paris, and finds there a chancery of experts who have had every opportunity of, and have been, studying affairs going on in that country, and whose business it is to report to him; but a colonial Governor lands in the colony with no such means of information, and I submit that it would be greatly to the interests of the Imperial connection and of the Governor, if, when he landed, he was met by an officer who had served with his predecessor and who would be able to keep him informed of the state of affairs in the colony. I should like to give your Lordships an illustration of what I mean. The Secretary of State for War has lately told us in the Memorandum on the Army Estimates that His Majesty's Government are in negotiation with the Dominion of Canada with regard to the evacuation of Halifax and Esquimault by the Imperial troops. I venture to say that that is not really a military question; it is a civil question of the first magnitude, and it vitally affects the relations between Canada and the United Kingdom. Is it fair to expect a Governor-General who has only recently landed in the colony to be able at once to give full information with regard to so important a matter? I venture to say that if the noble Earl, Lord Grey, had had, when he landed, an official from the Colonial Office who had served under Lord Minto as a member of his staff, he would have been very pleased, and I think that that is sufficiently proved by the fact that the present Governor-General of Canada has taken on a private secretary from the late Governor-General.

But, my Lords, that is only the smaller part of the argument. The real benefit of the proposal which I desire to put before your Lordships would be when the official who had served under the Governor in the colony returned to the Colonial Office. I ask, what means have the Colonial Office of knowing about the self-governing Colonies? I wish to guard myself from appearing in the slightest degree to lay the smallest aspersion on the Colonial Office. I know every member of its staff. I have the highest admiration of their ability; I have the greatest respect for their loyalty to their chief, for their industry, and for their general efficiency; but I ask, what opportunities have the Colonial Office of knowing about the self-governing Colonies? I do not mean to say that they do not know about what I will call the external affairs of those Colonies. They may be able to tell you every point connected with the Treaty Shore; they may know all about the Alaska boundary, or the Pacific cable, or the relations of Fiji and New Zealand; but how can they learn what are the true aspirations and feelings of a great country like Australia? You may say they have the Reports of the Governors. Yes, my Lords, but those Reports are intermittent, because the Governors are constantly changing. The Secretary of State for the Colonies does not know the Governors personally, or in the same way as the noble Marquess and his staff at the Foreign Office are acquainted with the ambassadors, because the Governors are temporary and the ambassadors are permanent; and it must discount from the value of a despatch if the man who reads it does not know the person who writes it, as might very well happen in the case of relations between the Governor of a colony and the persons who have to advise the Secretary of State for the Colonies in Downing Street.

To continue the parallel with the Foreign Office, I should like to point out that members of the Diplomatic Service and Foreign Office clerks very often interchange, and that the Foreign Office is the gainer by the information they receive. In the same way officials in the Colonial Service of the Crown Colonies very often work in the Colonial Office and give the Colonial Office the benefit of their experience, whilst Colonial Office clerks go out to the Crown Colonies. But such a state of things is impossible with regard to the self-governing Colonies, because the staff of the Governor, being temporary, comes to an end with the Governor. I feel that I ought to give an illustration of the real evil which the present system involves, and to do so I am forced to touch on a matter of controversial politics, but I shall do so in as uncontroversial a way as I can. I happened to be in Australia at the time when the Secretary of State for the Colonies introduced his Ordinance for the importation of Chinese labour into the Transvaal. I do not think anyone who is not personally acquainted with Australia can realise the intensity of Australian feeling on the Chinese question. They seem unable to dissociate the Chinese question in any country from their own cherished doctrine of a white Australia, and when one looked in the Press of Australia at that time one was unable to find any adequate declaration at all of what I believe were the views of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It appeared to me that Australian opinion was guided entirely from one side, and that Australians never heard the other side of the question.

I wish to call your Lordships' attention for a moment to what took place. The Legislature of the Commonwealth passed a Resolution in favour of a *referendum* being taken before the Chinese were admitted into the Transvaal, and it was passed unanimously in the Senate and quasi-unanimously in the House of Representatives. Now, what did the Secretary of State for the Colonies reply? He began by recognising the right of the Legislature of the Australian Commonwealth to express their opinion about this matter, and he alluded to the part played by Australians in the recent war. He then went on to say—

> "His Majesty's Government regret that for the reasons which have been stated in discussion upon the matter in Parliament during this present session they have been unable to adopt the policy advocated in the Resolution."

After that followed about ten lines containing two bare statements—that the condition of things was exceptional, and that the matter was extremely urgent. So far as I know that was the only official information which the Australian people had about this matter on which they felt very strongly, and in my humble opinion the Secretary of State for the Colonies lost a golden opportunity of laying before the people of Australia in a closely-reasoned and well-argued despatch the full grounds and reasons for his policy. Instead of that he referred them to speeches which he had himself made in the Imperial Parliament. My Lords, it is surely too much to expect of Australian statesmen that they should read the English *Hansard*, and I venture to think the man in the street in Australia never heard any argument at all in favour of the side which the Secretary of State for the Colonies was advocating. My point is this, that if there had been to advise the Secretary of State for the Colonies anybody who realised what the opinion of Australia was, I do not believe this despatch would ever have been issued.

One word more, and I have done. Your Lordships are aware—and nobody can be better aware than the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs —of the round-aboutness of negotiations between a self-governing colony and a foreign country. The Government of the colony has to communicate with the Governor; the Governor has to communicate with the Secretary of State for the Colonies; the Secretary of State has to communicate with the Foreign Office; the Foreign Office has to communicate with the British Ambassador abroad; and the British Ambassador has to communicate with the foreign Government. The cumbersomeness of this system has already found its vent in a clamour which has been raised in Canada for what is called the treaty-making power. As the noble Earl, Lord Rosebery, said in a speech about eighteen months ago, the offer of the Government of Canada to take over the treaty-making power is not one which is likely to unite the Empire more closely. That seems to me certainly the case, and the present system of negotiation is not one that can indefinitely last, but while it does it is of great importance that we should do all we can to grease the wheels of that very circuitous means of communication. In that chain of negotiation there is a link which is not in touch with the others on each side of it. I mean that when a Governor goes out new to Government House he and his staff are as little acquainted with Downing Street as they are, on the other side, at first with the Governor, and I submit that it would be better if the Governor had on his staff a man intimately acquainted with the ways of Downing Street.

I am encouraged to put this Question because I observe that not the least able administrator who has been sent out by the Colonial Office has insisted on the adoption of this system. Lord Milner has had on his staff for the last few years a person taken from the Colonial Office, and I am glad to say that the noble Lord who is going out as High Commissioner to South Africa in succession to Lord Milner is following his example. I desire to say that I have not brought this matter forward in any contentious or fussy spirit; I have not brought it forward in order to enjoy the exhilarating sensation of making a speech in your Lordships' House, but because I believe it to be really a matter of considerable importance, much more so than would at first sight meet the eye. I know there are objections to it, but I believe that the advantages far outweigh the objections. It is naturally very awkward for a Government to lose some of its trained officials, but in the consideration of this matter I would ask you to remember that the Colonial Office was made for the Colonies and not the Colonies for the Colonial Office. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, I have listened with great attention to the observations which have fallen from my noble friend opposite. The noble Lord is well qualified to give his views to your Lordships upon colonial administration, for he was for many years private secretary to the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, and was in close touch and made himself thoroughly familiar with the machinery of that great Department. But I confess that, in listening to his speech this afternoon, I could not help feeling that he had strayed away to a considerable extent from the original Question on the Order Paper of your Lordships' House. The noble Lord prefaced his remarks by telling your Lordships that when Governors go to self-governing Colonies they are for the first five or six months very little acquainted with either the history of, or the late political achievements in connection with, the Colonies, and that consequently they are unable to give the Secretary of State at home any very accurate information of what is taking place in the Colonies over which they preside. My noble friend has had experience in the Colonial Office. I can only speak for myself, and certainly during the time I have been at the Colonial Office I do not recollect that we have ever suffered from the lack of information from any Governor of a self-governing colony.

I confess I fail to understand the point of view of the noble Lord. He says that a Governor-General has no means whatever of making himself acquainted with what has taken place in the colony before his arrival, because he has no official from the Colonial Office on his staff who had arrived there before he went out. My noble friend seems to forget altogether that a Governor of a self-governing colony has the whole of the information of his confidential advisers in the shape of the Ministers of the day in the colony. They inform him, and, indeed, it is their absolutely duty to inform him, of all that has taken place, and the function of the Governor-General is to weigh that information and embody it in a despatch for the information of the Secretary of State. Seeing that that machinery exists, I for my part cannot admit that the contention of my noble friend is a very serious one. Because a Governor on his arrival in a colony has not got some official who has been sent out there by the Colonial Office two or three years previously, I do not see how it can be said that he is incapable of sending to the Government at home adequate information concerning the colony over which he presides. My noble friend drew some analogy between the duties of a Colonial Governor and those of an Ambassador. I am not closely acquainted with the functions of an Ambassador, and therefore he must forgive me if I do not follow him into an examination of that particular question. I will, however, deal with one other point which also exercises the mind of my noble friend. He said that in his opinion the views held by the self-governing Colonies upon important political questions which affect the Empire are inadequately represented in this country, or inadequately understood by us.

Lord MONK BRETTON: I did not say that the Colonies were inadequately represented in this country.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: The noble Lord stated that the views held by the self-governing Colonies were inadequately represented in this country. He seems to forget entirely that we are well acquainted in the Colonial Office with the views of the self-governing Colonies, and that we have machinery in the shape of despatches from the Governor or Governor-General. In addition, the important newspapers are continually sent home to the Colonial Office, and all those matters which we think exercise the minds of those dwelling in our self-governing Colonies are carefully marked and invariably brought before the notice of the Secretary of State. Not only do we receive information through the colonial Press, but in any question affecting a particular colony there is the ordinary method of transmitting information, the cable and the telegraph, and there is, too, the English Press. My noble friend knows perfectly well that if there is any matter of importance affecting Canada, Australia, or any of the other Colonies, it is immediately cabled over and included in the information in the daily Press here. I would go further and remind my noble friend that if there is a matter which seriously affects the interests of a self-governing colony, a matter on which the colonists themselves feel strongly, they are able to have their views represented every four years at the Colonial Conference over which the Secretary of State for the Colonies presides. So I really do not think my noble friend's contention will, on reflection, be given that importance which he has attached to it.

My noble friend passed from the consideration of the feelings of the self-governing Colonies and gave the House an illustration in support of his argument. During his visit to Australia he was enabled, he said, to hear from the Australians their views upon the question of Chinese labour, and he told us, furthermore, that the Australians had received very little information as to the views and ideas of the Imperial Government upon this most important and difficult problem. I am at a loss to understand how that could possibly be true. There is the medium of the Press and there is the telegraph, and if the Australians were so interested in this problem as my noble friend assures us they were, surely the Press of that country would have taken the first means it could to inform itself of the views and the ideas of the people here at home. My noble friend seems to think that all these difficulties might have been removed if only there had been some representative of the Colonial Office who had arrived in Australia two or three years before this particular problem presented itself both to our notice and to the notice of the people of Australia. I cannot agree with my noble friend. I do not think the advantages of the presence of a permanent official in the different self-governing Colonies would be so great as he imagines.

The noble Lord is perfectly aware that during Mr. Chamberlain's tenure at the Colonial Office he, in some instances, did send what are known as first-class clerks to certain of the Crown Colonies, and some of the more important officials in the Crown Colonies came over to the Colonial Office and worked there with the rest of the officials. This practice, although inconvenient, was on the whole found to work well. We were anxious that the first-class clerks might have an opportunity of learning on the spot political administration, and it was furthermore felt by the Civil Service at home that it would be useful to have some of the high officials of the Crown Colonies at home in order that they might acquaint themselves with the work of the Colonial Office, and in order that we might test whether they were fit for further promotion. But although this practice held good with regard to first-class clerks it has never been extended to those who occupy the position of second-class clerks.

My noble friend alluded to the fact that Lord Milner had a private secretary who was a second-class clerk in the Colonial Office, and that Lord Selborne was going to follow his example. That is perfectly true, but the reason why those two distinguished administrators have been authorised to take second-class clerks from the Colonial Office is that the political conditions of the Transvaal are of exceptional interest and of vast importance. The administration of the two new colonies is a source of great interest to the young clerks in the Colonial Office, and they gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of going out to the Transvaal to work under such distinguished administrators as Lord Milner and Lord Selborne. But although the Colonial Office have consented to this practice in the case of the Transvaal, they do not view it with any very great favour, and for this reason. We have only got a certain number of second-class clerks at the Colonial Office; we have not got a redundant number; and if we are to supply the Governors of the self-governing Colonies with private secretaries or officials, as the noble Lord suggests, I fear the Colonial Office will be entirely depleted of all its able men. Having weighed the suggestion of my noble friend, the Secretary of State and, indeed, all those who advise him at the Colonial Office, have come to the conclusion that it would be quite impracticable.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: My Lords, I would ask the indulgence of the House while I offer a few observations upon the interesting statement which has just been made by the noble Duke. We all sympathise with the aim of the noble Lord who raised this question, but I am sure the House, and more especially those who have been called upon to occupy the position of Governor in our Colonies, will feel that this matter involves very delicate considerations. There is a sensitiveness in the minds of our colonial fellow-subjects in regard to anything which might seem like, to use a colloquial expression, the Imperial authorities having a finger in the colonial pie, and this feeling of sensitiveness co-exists and is consistent with the most complete loyalty to the mother country. I feel convinced that such a proposal as that which has been made by the noble Lord would be regarded with considerable misgiving. The noble Duke has very fully answered the contention of the noble Lord, but I think no portion of his speech will be appreciated in the Colonies more than the sentence in which he indicated that the source from which a Governor should obtain information to send home is through his responsible advisers. That will be looked upon in the Colonies as a very sound and healthy sentiment. I would venture to add that apart from that, a new Governor wishing to be primed as to the ins and outs of the position would in the first place have the fullest confidential information from his predecessor, and, again, at the Colonial Office, before going out, he would receive the fullest information as to the position at the moment in the colony. The noble Duke the Under - Secretary mentioned various sources of information in regard to colonial affairs, and I think he will agree with me that there should be added the Agents-General for the Colonies in this country, who are being increasingly recognised by the Colonial Office as valuable sources of information. The example which the noble Lord gave as to the feeling of Australia with regard to the importation into South Africa of Chinese labour was not, in my opinion, the happiest he could have chosen. He said Australia did not know enough of the Colonial Office view, but I imagine his chief contention was that the Colonial Office did not know enough of the Australian view.

LORD MONK BRETTON: My contention was that if there had been in the Colonial Office somebody who knew Australia personally, he would have been able to inform the Secretary of State for the Colonies of the intensity of opinion in Australia with regard to the Chinese labour question.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: I should have thought the colonial Governors would have been able to convey information on such a point. But I merely rose to express my conviction that the reply of the noble Duke would in the main be regarded as eminently satisfactory, not only by your Lordships' House and this country, but by the Colonies.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I can add nothing to what has fallen from the noble Earl who has just sat down, but I think, perhaps, as I had the honour of filling the position of Colonial Secretary for three years, I ought to say with what satisfaction I heard the Answer of the noble Duke the Under-Secretary. I feel convinced that the proposal of the noble Lord behind me is one which ought not to be entertained. It is a delicate proposal, and I think I should not be very wrong if I said it was a dangerous one. During the time that I occupied the position of Colonial Secretary I never found the slightest difficulty in obtaining any information which I required in regard to what was going on in our self-governing Colonies, and I do not know that any other Secretary of State has found it more difficult than I did. You may rely upon it that a proposal of this kind would not be acceptable to the self-governing Colonies. They would regard with suspicion—undue suspicion, no doubt, but they would regard with suspicion—the person who was put in the position sketched by the noble Lord behind me, and I am very glad indeed to learn that His Majesty's Government do not intend to entertain any proposal of the kind.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I think your Lordships could have scarcely gathered from the terms of the Notice which the noble Lord put on the Paper that he was going to bring before us so serious and far-reaching a proposal as that which he has sketched out. I thought, when I saw the Notice, that he was going to call attention to the refusal of the Colonial Office to place some particular clerk at the disposal of some particular Governor, but I understand him to suggest a great deal more than that. What I understand him to suggest is that each Governor-General or Governor should be, so to speak, reinforced by the addition to his staff of a certain number of officials connected with the Colonies who will not quit their official posts when a change in the office of Governor takes place. That is, I think, a serious proposal, and one which, as the noble Marquess has told us, would be regarded with grave misgivings by the self-governing Colonies. I think, if the noble Lord will forgive me for saying so, he showed how completely he misapprehends the case when he attempted to set up an analogy between these colonial appointments and appointments under the Foreign Office. The two things are entirely different. The position of a Colonial Governor is not that of an Ambassador. An ambassador represents his country at a foreign Court. It is his business to watch the proceedings of the foreign Government as closely as he can, and in reporting to his own Government he acts upon his own responsibility. The position of a Colonial Governor is entirely different. He is the representative of a constitutional Sovereign, and is himself the constitutional head of the Colonial Government, and although he has many and very valuable opportunities of making the Government at home aware of his personal views, he is constitutionally bound to act upon the advice of his own responsible Ministers. I am convinced that an endeavour to set up a little colonial secretariat in each of the self-governing Colonies would be a chronic source of suspicion and friction between the Governor and his constitutional advisers, and would be liable to create the impression that the representative of the Crown relied, not on his Ministers, but upon his own secretariat. The new Governor-General or Governor should be able to obtain the service of the best men for his staff that he can collect, and there may sometimes be a great advantage in his keeping on one or two members of the outgoing Governor's staff, but further than that I certainly would not go. There may be also some advantage from the occasional employment of Colonial Office clerks or other officers in the Colonies. That is a most useful practice; it is occasionally resorted to; but it differs entirely from the much wider proposal sketched out by the noble Lord, to which I hope no encouragement will be given.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 10th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—West Cumberland Electric Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Acton Sewage Bill; Birmingham Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Great Northern Railway Bill (King's consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill (King's consent signified). Bill read the third time, and passed.

London Gas Bill; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Otley Improvement Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Seaham Gas Bill; Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

North Sussex Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Woolwich Borough Council Bill. As amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Holy Trinity, Portsea, Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (TAXATION).

Petition from Pembroke, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Anniesland; Biggar; and Buckie; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Chippenham; Hammersmith; and Poplar; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, against; to lie upon the Table.

SHIPOWNERS' NEGLIGENCE (REMEDIES) BILL.

Petition from the Scottish Trade Protection Society, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE MARKS BILL.

Petition from the Scottish Trade Protection Society, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLLING DISTRICTS (CITY OF MANCHESTER).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the City of Manchester dividing the Parliamentary Borough of Manchester into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (ESTATES COMMISSIONERS).

Copy presented, of Report of the Estates Commissioners for the period from 1st November, 1903, to 31st December, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COMMISSION OF THE PEACE (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; *Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118.]

INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL COMMITEE.

Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee on Industrial Alcohol [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th April, 1905, granting to William H. Wood, Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL IMPORTS (FRANCE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th March; *Sir Thomas Wrightson*]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3338 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1905–6).

Copy ordered, of "Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TRANSFER OF TREASURY POWERS) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum explanatory of the Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers) Bill."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 102.]

LOCAL TAXATION (GRANTS IN AID).

Return ordered, "showing the amounts distributed in respect of the financial year 1904–5 to each county council and parish council in Scotland, under Section 4 (3) of The Agricultural Rates, Congested Districts, and Burgh Land Tax Relief (Scotland) Act, 1896, and Section 2 (1) of The Local Taxation Account (Scotland) Act, 1898."—(*Mr. Black.*)

EAST INDIA (APPEALS).

Address for "Return of rules, as last revised, governing the submission of Appeals to the Government of India from the orders of subordinate authorities, and to the Secretary of State in Council from the orders of the Government of India and the Governments of Madras and Bombay."

"And also of the number of such Appeals submitted for the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council during the six years ending the 31st day of December, 1904, giving the number in each year separately, and showing how many were forwarded to the Secretary of State for orders and how many were withheld in India, and how these statistics compared with the corresponding figures for the six years ending the 31st day of December, 1898." — (*Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Branch Post Offices in London.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in the interests of the public service and with the object of securing the efficient transaction of business, he has decided that in future some one of the rank of officer will be in charge of branch offices in the London postal districts from the time of opening until they close, in view of the importance of the postal and telegraph business undertaken at these offices, and in order to relieve the rank and file from the responsibility now put upon them.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am dealing with this matter in connection with the question of increasing the number of overseers and of female supervisors in London.

Alien Immigrants from the Continent.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will state the number of alien immigrants who have come to the United Kingdom during the last ten years from Hamburg, Bremen, Libau, Rotterdam, Antwerp, and other ports.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The number of aliens who arrived in the United Kingdom from the undermentioned Continental ports in each of the years from 1895 to 1904 inclusive, was as follows:—

A.—Aliens not described in the alien lists as *en route* to other countries.

	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
Hamburg -	9,864	11,547	11,128	12,296	14,265	17,467	13,074	16,679	14,734	19,364
Bremen -	4,130	5,180	4,533	6,892	7,412	7,832	6,498	7,702	9,742	9,710
Libau - -	628	1,787	4,409	2,013	3,122	5,226	5,743	6,941	6,580	7,656
Rotterdam -	3,901	3,077	2,771	4,022	5,939	8,676	7,841	9,922	12,535	19,774
Antwerp -	701	897	1,023	1,114	1,115	1,142	1,324	1,246	1,463	1,496
Other Ports -	21,198	23,421	25,749	26,747	32,393	37,112	36,130	39,043	37,546	37,708
Total	40,422	45,909	49,613	53,084	64,246	77,455	70,610	81,533	82,600	95,708

B.—Aliens described in the alien lists as *en route* to other countries.

	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
Hamburg -	4,070	2,058	1,868	1,289	191	133	446	659	3,845	3,277
Bremen -	3,426	1,127	1,655	2,593	1,563	1,774	1,838	2,486	2,036	2,452
Libau - -	2,967	1,566	1,396	736	1,331	2,959	1,819	5,538	4,811	6,295
Rotterdam -	2,761	502	556	1,681	3,279	7,655	7,564	12,738	15,379	11,703
Antwerp -	1,155	342	293	177	379	2,448	5,651	6,253	6,023	12,731
Other Ports -	30,258	34,441	26,453	25,701	43,204	56,713	61,822	90,804	92,497	62,820
Total	44,637	40,036	32,221	32,177	49,947	71,682	79,140	118,478	124,591	99,278

Mayo Extra Police Force.

Mr. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the police barracks in Mayo to which in 1899 and 1900 the constables constituting the extra police force were assigned; the stations from which they were transferred as an extra force; and when the extra force was discontinued to what stations the extra constables were allotted, or if they were merged in the ordinary force in the county.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The additional force was distributed over a large number of stations in the county, The men constituting the force were drafted in partly from other counties and partly from the depôt. When the extra force was discontinued the men constituting it were merged in the county establishment on the triennial redistribution of the free *quota* in 1900.

Report of Admiralty Committee on Designs.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Committee on Designs, appointed to advise the Board of Admiralty on questions connected with the designs of different types of fighting ships, has reported; whether action is being taken on the Report; and whether the Admiralty adheres to its determination to withhold from Parliament both the Report and the terms of reference.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The Committee has reported and action is being taken on their Report. The determination not to publish the Report and terms of reference was arrived at after careful consideration, and will be adhered to in the interests of the service.

Admiralty Contracts—Messrs. Holloway and the Fair Wages Clause.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether Messrs. Holloway are carrying out a Government building contract in connection with Admiralty extension works; whether, if so, he will ascertain if the firm in question are duly recognising the Fair Wages Clause in their contract, especially in connection with plumbers' wages, and are paying the rates of wages accepted as current in the district.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. A representation has been received on the subject and is now being investigated.

Floating Mines in Chinese Waters.

SIR THOMAS WRIGHTSON (St. Pancras, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can say how many floating mines have been recovered from Chinese waters since his last statement to the House; and what, if any, measures are being taken to prevent neutral ships from coming within the zone of danger.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The number of floating mines which have been recovered from Chinese waters since the 15th ultimo is not known, but on March 23rd Sir Claude MacDonald telegraphed that the Japanese Navy were making efforts to remove floating mines from the waters of the Liaotung Peninsula, and that gunboats were daily sweeping for mines near Port Arthur and Newchwang. A notice has been issued to mariners, dated April 7th, warning them of the necessity of still keeping a constant look out for mines, especially in the approaches to any part of the Kwang Tung Peninsula and Newchwang.

Reports on Navigable Inland Waterways on the Continent.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether any Reports have been asked for, or received from His Majesty's Representatives, on Navigable Inland Waterways in Austria, Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, in continuation of the Reports presented to Parliament in 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) No, Sir, but there is no objection to calling for further Reports if the hon. Member desires it.

Trinity College Tenants—Report of Vice-Regal Commission.

MR PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when he will lay upon the Table the Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on the position of the Trinity College tenants under The Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Commissioners expect shortly to complete the Report.

Curragh Farm—Reinstatement of Miss Elizabeth Colgan.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement to Curragh Farm, Kildare, from Miss Elizabeth Colgan; if so, what action has been taken in the matter; have the Estates Commissioners acquired any untenanted land in Kildare; if so, how much; and whether, in the event of it being found impossible to restore Miss Colgan to Curragh Farm, she will be provided with an equivalent holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Yes, Sir; but the evicted holding was purchased by a new tenant eighteen years ago. The Commissioners have not acquired any untenanted land in Kildare, but if they should do so they will consider the application.

Applications for Reinstatement from Evicted Tenants in South Cork.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many applications for reinstatement have been received by the Estates Commissioners from evicted tenants in South Cork; how many have been reinstated by the landlords voluntarily and by the Estates Commissioners, respectively, since the passing of the Land Act of 1903; and what financial assistance have those tenants got to enable them to make a new start in life.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This information is not tabulated by Parliamentary divisions. In the entire county 602 applications have been received from evicted tenants, of whom eight have been reinstated by the landlords. One has been provided by the Commissioners with a farm in another county, and assisted with a grant of £100.

Inquiry into Cases of Evicted Tenants on the White Estate, Bantry.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inspector appointed by the Estates Commissioners to inquire into the cases of evicted tenants on the White Estate, near Bantry, made personal inquiry or through a member of the firm of solicitors who had the carriage of the sale of the estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The inspector made personal inquiry in each case.

Transit of Irish Butter.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a complaint made by Major Hickman, of Fenloe, Newmarket-on-Fergus, county Clare, that on March 15th and 18th he sent a box of butter on both dates to the President, Royal Artillery Canteen, Woolwich, and the boxes were sent from Limerick by goods train via Waterford, and were not delivered until March 22nd; and whether, seeing the injury that is done to butter so detained, he will communicate with the Irish Department on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department is inquiring into the subject of this complaint.

Irish Education—Rule 127 (b).

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Commissioners of Education in Ireland made any effort to ascertain the opinions of managers and others previous to making the new Rule 127 (b); how such effort was made by them; at how many meetings was the rule discussed; how many Commissioners were present at the discussion; on the motion of which Commissioner was the rule adopted; and whether it was adopted unanimously.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am about to look into this matter, and would ask the hon. Member to defer the Question until after the Easter recess.

Swine Fever in Wexford.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the County Wexford Committee of Agriculture and Technical Instruction passed a resolution inviting the Department of Agriculture to hold an inquiry regarding the restrictions placed on Dr. Gibbon's farm at Sleedagh with reference to the alleged existence of swine fever on it, and the consequent loss and trouble sustained by him although swine fever did not exist on his farm; and whether he will see that the inquiry called for will be held.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Restrictions were placed on the farm because of the movement to and from the land of an animal belonging to another person on whose premises swine fever had appeared. The restrictions were necessary and usual, and it is not proposed to hold the inquiry suggested.

Duchess of Cornwall Seed Potatoes.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the supply of the Duchess of Cornwall potato, to be utilised by the Irish Agricultural Department, was grown on their experimental farms; and, if not, what price has been paid for the seed, what quantity is required for the limited trials of this variety now intended to be carried out by the Department, and in what counties.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The supply of Duchess of Cornwall potatoes to be utilised for the experiments on the Department's farms was grown last year on one of their farms. The Department cannot say what quantity is actually being tested at each of its farms, but they are satisfied that they have sufficient for their purposes. The experiments are to be carried out at the Albert Agricultural College Farm, Glasnevin, county Dublin; the Munster Institute Farm, Cork; the Agricultural Station, Ballyhaise, county Cavan; the Agricultural Station, Athenry, county Galway; and the Agricultural Station, Clonakilty, county Cork.

Preservation of Fauna in British Africa.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps have been taken to preserve the fauna in the British African Possessions, as suggested by the International Conference held in 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Legislation upon the lines of the recommendations of the International Conference of 1900 has been adopted generally by all those Governments which had not already enacted similar regulations; and recently, since receiving a deputation from the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire on the subject, I have communicated with the various authorities as to the establishment, where advisable and necessary, of game preserves.

Profits of Premier Diamond Mine.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Premier Diamond Mine has declared a dividend on its share capital for the half-year amounting to £210,000; and, if so, will he say whether the remaining 60 per cent. of the profits, amounting to £315,000, to which the Transvaal Government is entitled, will be paid at the same time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) In a telegram recently received the officer administering the Government of the Transvaal states that before division of profits with the Transvaal Government the company are entitled to repayment with interest of the capital expended in the mine. This repayment is £85,000. The sum of £125,000 will be paid to shareholders as an interim dividend. The Government share is therefore £187,000. Under the Ordinance the Government cannot claim any payment whatever on account of its share in profits, whether in the form of interim dividend or otherwise, till the company's yearly accounts are made up (that is to say, until January 31st, 1906), but the company has consented, in the event of any interim dividend to shareholders, to make an interim payment of the same amount to the Government, and to pay the balance of the Government share out of their next diamond sales, and before any further dividend is paid to shareholders. In connection with the present dividend the Government will receive

£125,000 simultaneously with the shareholders, and £62,500 out of the next available cash.

Military and Naval Service and Civil Pensions.

Sir J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that candidates on the roll for the Royal Irish Constabulary are permitted to join the Irish Guards on a three years enlistment, of which two years will be reckoned towards their Constabulary pension in the event of their being subsequently enrolled in the Royal Irish Constabulary, and that men in civil departments of the Imperial Government, who are transferred to the Post Office, can reckon the whole of their service in such departments towards their Post Office pensions, he will explain why a concession of a like nature is not granted to soldiers and sailors who are admitted to established appointments in His Majesty's Civil Service who do not at present receive any superannuation for services performed in the Army or Navy.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I am not aware that service in the Irish Guards reckons towards the pension of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and I think that the hon. Member must be under a misapprehension on the point. As stated in my reply to the hon. Member for Camberwell North on March 29th†, legislation would be necessary in order to enable military service to reckon for civil pension, and it does not appear to me that such legislation is called for in the circumstances of the present time.

Bond Investment Companies.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to the operations of Bond Investment companies and the necessity, if any, which exists for Government supervision of their transactions.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Board of Trade propose to appoint a small Committee to inquire into the subject of Bond Investment companies and to report.

Conveyance of Fish from Ullapool to Kyle.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he has any information showing how the steamer engaged by the Congested District Boards for the conveyance of fish from Ullapool, Ross-shire, and intervening ports to Kyle, has performed the work which is required by the Board; and will he state at what time the steamer leaves Ullapool and at what hour she is timed to return from Kyle.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am informed that the steamer "Dora" has run, with the exception of one breakdown, most satisfactorily. She leaves Ullapool every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 10 o'clock p.m. and arrives at Kyle between 2 and 5 the following morning, according to the heaviness of the traffic at Badachro where she calls. She leaves Kyle for Ullapool about 2 a.m. on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Convictions for Drunk and Disorderly Conduct in Scotland.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the number of persons who were convicted as guilty of drunk and disorderly conduct in Scotland in each of the years ending 31st December, 1901, 1902, 1903, and 1904; how many were convicted in each of the first two years on summons for being drunk and incapable, and during last two years after summons or arrest for the same offence for the same years; how many during the last two years were convicted for being drunk; and not necessarily incapable, whilst having charge of a child; how many persons convicted of drunkenness were ordered to give security for good behaviour: and how many persons obtained protection against husband or wife who was an habitual drunkard.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) Particulars of convictions are not available under the precise headings desired by the hon. Member, but statistics of convictions for drunkenness and similar offences classified under the headings adopted for the Scottish Judicial Statistics are given for the years 1901, 1902, and 1903 in the appended table. Citations and arrests cannot be given separately. Of the offences under the heading "Breach of the peace, etc.," about 90 per cent. are estimated to have been committed under the influence of drink. Drunkenness while in charge of a child was constituted an offence under Section 70 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1903; protection against a drunken husband or wife was provided under Section 73 of the same Act, and caution for good behaviour was prescribed by Section 71. The Act only came into operation on the 1st January, 1904; and the Judicial Statistics for 1904 will not, in ordinary course, be available before October next:—

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 1526.

Convictions for—

	Habitual drunkenness or drunkenness under Inebriates Acts.	Breach of the peace, disorderly conduct, and petty assaults.	Drunkenness and drunk and incapable.	Drunk or drinking in shebeen.	Total.
1901	68	48,121	30,610	180	78,979
1902	83	47,273	29,482	52	76,890
1903	99	44,924	25,131	27	70,181

Relief of Able-Bodied Unemployed in Scotland.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he proposes to introduce legislation to repeal Section 68 of the Poor Law (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1845, by which able-bodied persons out of employment are expressly debarred from claiming relief from the Poor Law authorities, and to making the law of Scotland conform to that of England in respect to the relief of the able-bodied unemployed.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Answer to the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

Brechin Parish Council Election.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether his attention has been called to the action at law arising out of certain candidates for the Brechin Parish Council having issued a poll card on the eve of the election, which the learned sheriff who tried the case said had been proved to have prevented one or more electors from recording their vote; and whether he proposes to amend the law of corrupt and illegal practices in respect to the issue of such cards.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) My attention has been called to the proceedings and action referred to. The sheriff found that while there had been carelessness in connection with the issuing of the card in question there was nothing fraudulent, and accordingly he refused the prayer of the petition, but in respect of said carelessness found no expenses due to the respondent. I do not think that such a case necessitates an amendment of the law.

Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that discontent prevails amongst the staff of the Registry of Deeds, Dublin, owing to the reductions effected by the Treasury in December, 1902, in the number and salaries of the higher posts; and whether, in view of this fact and of the amount of extra work thrown on the Department by the operation of the Irish Land Act of 1903, he will take steps to place the higher posts on the basis which they occupied prior to December, 1902, and to remunerate searchers according to the scale established by the Treasury in 1898.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) This subject has for some time past engaged the attention of the Treasury, and an increase in the number of staff posts has just been sanctioned.

Latest Report of Commission for the Exhibition of 1851.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the date of the latest Report issued by the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851; when will another Report be issued; if he can state the names of the Commissioners; and what is the amount of the annual income received by them.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The last Report of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 was issued on 23rd July, 1889. I understand that the date for the issue of the next Report has not yet been settled. For the names of the members of the Commission, I would refer my hon. friend to the Imperial Calendar (page 403). The amount of the annual income to the 31st December, 1903, was £23,081 5s. 4d. These are the latest certified figures.

Wolverhampton Motor-Car Accident.

MR. BROOKE ROBINSON (Dudley): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been called to a motor-car accident on Saturday, 1st April, on the Holyhead Road, in the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton; whether the Board are aware that, on the afternoon of that day, the Automobile Club of Wolverhampton proceeded, after the manner of cyclist clubs, for a so-called motor-car run on the road in question, when, owing to the cars that took part in the run, and their proximity to each other, the dust occasioned was such that it was at times impossible to discern other objects in the road, the result being that one of the cars ran into a carrier's cart, killing the horse, and seriously injuring its occupants, the explanation of the motorist by whom the accident was occasioned, and an illustration of the denseness of the dust, being that not only was he, owing to that cause, unable to see the cart, but he was unaware he was on the wrong side of the road; and, if so, whether the Local Government Board will issue an Order requiring the discontinuance of the practice of such motor-car runs.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have seen a newspaper account of this accident. I am afraid the suggestion in the Question hardly appears to be a practicable one.

Accidents at Places of Amusement in London.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of casualties, fatal or other, which occurred during the past year during the performance of acrobatic feats, feats of horsemanship, acrobatic bicycling, lion-taming, and other such exhibitions taking place in licensed places of entertainment in London.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The police have no record of the number of accidents occurring at places of amusement in London, and the information asked for can only be obtained by making inquiry at each such place. These inquiries are, however, being made; and I shall be happy to let the hon. Member know the result. It must be remembered that there are no means of verifying the information given by the management, and that in many cases satisfactory records are probably not kept.

Belfast Telegraph Department Staff.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what is the strength of the male staffs in the telegraph departments at Belfast; how many hold appointments under the Tweedmouth Dual Scheme; and of the dual men how many have been withdrawn from rotating between the postal and telegraph departments and allotted to the latter.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am obtaining the information for which the hon. Member asks, and will communicate it to him.

Postal Facilities at Cockshutt and Croseman (Shropshire).

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the complaint of the parish council of Cockshutt, in Shropshire, that the postal facilities of Cockshutt and Croseman are worse than they were a few years ago; and whether he will take steps to improve the present facilities.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have received the application referred to, and inquiry is being made respecting it. There has, it appears, been some difficulty in ascertaining the precise facts in the case, but I will send the hon. Member a reply as soon as the inquiry is completed.

Payment of Postal Orders—Signatures in Irish.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the postal order for which payment had been refused by the postmaster of Ballyhaunis because the payee, Mr. F. Swift, affixed his signature in Irish, has yet been cashed; has any apology been offered to Mr. Swift for the inconvenience to which he has been put; and whether precautions will be taken that in future and under similar circumstances courtesy equal to that extended to foreign residents will be extended to Irish speakers.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The postal order tendered by Mr. Swift at Ballyhaunis Post Office was cashed as soon as the postmaster was satisfied that the signature in Irish was the signature of Mr. Swift. As I explained to the hon. Member on the 3rd instant†, this is the course prescribed by the regulations; and if any apology is called for, it is Mr. Swift who should apologise for the unnecessary trouble he gave. The same course will be followed in any similar cases that may occur in the future.

Admiralty Control of Wireless Telegraph Stations.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the importance of wireless telegraphy on the coast of the United Kingdom in relation to national defence, any steps are being taken by the Admiralty to secure the control of all wireless telegraphic stations.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) This matter has been, and is, occupying the instant and earnest attention of the Admiralty.

Premises of Solar Physics Committee at South Kensington.

MR. COGHILL: To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether the premises occupied by the Solar Physics Committee at South Kensington are well adapted for their purpose; and whether the First Commissioner of Works could find at Richmond or at Kew a more suitable site for an observatory.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) This is a matter which concerns the Board of Education rather than the Office of Works. It is premature at this time for the First Commissioner to consider the question of a new site, in case such should be thought necessary.

Non-provided Schools—Appointment of Managers.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he will state how many non-provided elementary schools, at the passing of the Education Act, 1902, or within three months thereafter, possessed trust deeds containing provision as to the appointment of managers consistent with the provisions of the Act, and how many of such schools did not possess such trust deeds, and how many did not possess any trust deed at all; and, in the latter cases, whether he can lay upon the Table of the House the various forms of draft Orders, interim or final, issued by the Board to such last-mentioned categories of schools, stating the number of cases in which each form was respectively adopted; and whether with or without modifications.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board are now preparing statistics which will enable them to give the information desired, but the work will probably require about two months for completion, and it would be almost impossible to give the information sooner.

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† See page 146.

Training of Irish Teachers in Elementary Science.

Mr. P. J. KENNEDY (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what steps have the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland taken to carry out the arrangement entered into with the Commissioners of National Education for the purpose of training teachers in elementary science as mentioned in their circular (No. 27) to county councillors bearing date August, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department, as stated in the circular referred to, are prepared to approve of provision being made for the training of national school teachers in elementary science under local schemes of technical instruction. The provision of such instruction is not binding upon local technical instruction committees, but facilities are extended by the Department where there is a demand for such instruction, and where the local authority is willing to undertake it as part of their scheme of technical instruction. At the present time provision is made in six urban technical schools for courses of instruction of this character.

Building of Fishing Boats for the Irish Congested Districts Board.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many fishing boats were built for the Congested Districts Board in 1904, and how many of them were built in Ireland; and how many boats are in order for the Board this year, and how many are to be built in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Seven fishing boats were built for the Board in the year 1904–5, and of these six were built in Ireland. For 1905–6 five have, so far, been ordered, and three of them from Scotland, because they could not be built within the required time in Ireland.

Poulduff Pier, County Wexford.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the work at Poulduff Pier, in county Wexford, will be begun by the Department of Agriculture.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department have asked for tenders, and if a satisfactory tender should be received a contract will be at once entered into, in which case it is hoped that the work will be commenced forthwith.

Fishermen Resident in Irish Congested Districts.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can give the number of fishermen resident in the congested districts.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Congested Districts Board are unable to supply this information.

O'Conor Estate, County Mayo.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the purchase by the tenants of the O'Conor Estate, situate in Floughena, near Charlestown, county Mayo, has yet received the sanction of the Estates Commissioners; whether, if so, the terms of agreement contain provisions for the reinstatement of the family of the late Thomas Durkan, an evicted tenant; and, if not, will the Commissioners be instructed to make inquiries into this case, with a view of having this orphan family reinstated.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) No proceedings for the sale of this estate have yet been instituted before the Commissioners. An application for reinstatement has been received from Mary Durkan, as representative of Thomas Durkan, and this will be considered in due course.

Loans to Irish Tenant Farmers.

Mr. GILHOOLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that a tenant farmer in Ireland whose rateable valuation is

£7 would be entitled to a loan of £50 under the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, and that several tenant farmers who have recently applied have been refused such loans, he will say whether such refusals are the result of a Treasury Minute; and whether small holders, who offer personal security in addition to the security of their holdings, will in the future be granted loans for the improvements of their farms.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Loans to occupiers under Section 31 (2) of the Act referred to are subject to the provisions of the Landed Property Improvement (Ireland) Acts, so far as the Treasury may declare the same to be applicable. The Treasury have amongst others declared Section 18 of the Act 10 Vic., c. 32, applicable to such advances. This section empowers the Commissioners of Public Works with the sanction of the Treasury to make rules and regulations. The regulations now provide that no loan to an occupying tenant will be granted for a less sum than £35, nor will any loan be granted under ordinary conditions for a greater sum than three times the annual value or judicial rent of the holding to be charged. The rule may be relaxed if the applicant's landlord (being an absolute owner) joins in the loan, or where other acceptable collateral security is offered. Personal collateral security is not accepted. I am unable to recommend any variation of the existing limitations.

Mayo County Council and the Public Bodies Order, 1904.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution of the Mayo County Council protesting against the putting into practice of the Public Bodies Order, 1904, as involving unnecessary expense and labour; and whether, seeing that it would necessitate the adoption of a yearly rate book, instead of a triennial one as is in use at present, he will see that the Order is withdrawn.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The resolution of the Mayo County Council does not protest against the Public Bodies Order, but merely requests permission to use the existing rate book. In reply, the Local Government Board stated that if the county council decided to continue to use the present rate book they must accept full responsibility for so doing, as the Board had some doubts as to the legality of adopting rate books with the object of making them available for use for a period of more than a year.

Incumbrances on the Estate of W. L. Rae, Killorglin, Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the incumbrancers on the estate of W. L. Rae, Killorglin, Kerry, will be paid; and what rate of interest, and whether simple or compound, will be added to the principal.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The final schedule of incumbrances has not yet been filed, and it cannot therefore be stated at present when they will be paid off. The rate of interest is determined in each case by the instrument creating the charge.

Children's Courts in Ireland.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say in what places in Ireland children's Courts have actually been established for the separate trial of juvenile offenders; and whether any such Courts are at work in Great Britain.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Dublin, Belfast, and Cork.

Captain Annesley Knox Estate, near Ballyhaunis.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there have been any negotiations between the Congested Districts Board and the trustees on the Captain Annesley Knox Estate, near Ballyhaunis, with reference to the purchase of the grazing ranche known as the Island Farm; if so, whether negotiations are still proceeding; and whether there is any prospect of the Congested Districts Board taking over the place with a view to the enlargement of the small holdings in the vicinity of this farm.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) This estate, which includes the Island Farm, has not been offered for sale to the Congested Districts Board.

Hon. Mrs. Ker's Estate, County Limerick.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the untenanted land, the property of the hon. Mrs. Ker, situate at Kilcoleman, Shanagolden, county Limerick, has been sold to the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, whether they intend to parcel it out amongst the evicted tenants, and enlarge the uneconomic holdings in the neighbourhood.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) An application for the sale of this estate has been received, but not yet ruled on. The question of the untenanted land will be considered by the Commissioners when dealing with the estate.

British Troops Armed with the Revolver.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state to what extent British troops are armed with the revolver; and whether he proposes to consider the advisability of extending its use.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The revolver is issued to the following:—Cavalry: Warrant officers, staff sergeants, trumpeters, artificers, and drivers. Military mounted police: Non-commissioned officers and men. Engineers: Warrant officers, staff sergeants, trumpeters, non-commissioned officers, shoeing smiths, and drivers, except telegraph and field troop. Infantry: Sergeant pipers and pipers of the Scots Guards and Highland battalions and drivers of regimental transport. Army Service Corps: Mounted warrant officers and others armed with cavalry swords (except those with medical units). It is not proposed to extend the use of the revolver.

Roads Leading to Jinaal Military Camp.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he has considered the resolution of the Wicklow County Council in reference to the roads leading to the military camp at Jinaal, and whether he has come to any conclusion on the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The matter is still under consideration.

Government Redistribution Proposals.

Sir HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can say when he will be able to lay before the House the proposals of the Government for diminishing the anomalies in the present arrangement of electoral areas, as promised in His Majesty's Speech from the Throne; and what will be the method of procedure he proposes to adopt, *i.e.*, whether by Bill, or, in the first instance, by Resolution, with a scheme attached, or otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The proposals for Redistribution cannot be laid before the House before the Easter recess, but I hope that no long delay will take place after the termination of that period. It is premature to make any statement as regards the precise form in which the proposals in question will be presented.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Naval Reserve—Ullapool Station.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the tenders for the work in connection with the establishment of a Royal Naval Reserve station at Ullapool, Ross-shire, have yet been considered; and can he say when the work is likely to be commenced.

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham): The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the negative. With regard to the latter part, as has already been explained in answer to a Question by the hon. Member for Inverness, on February 28th,† the whole question of Royal Naval Reserve batteries is in process of reconsideration at the Admiralty, and no decision with regard to them has yet been arrived at.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1468.

Resignation of Officers.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many commissioned officers of the Regular Army, Militia, and Volunteers respectively, have sent in their papers during the six months ending on the 28th of February, 1905; what were the corresponding numbers in the similar periods in the two previous years; how many resignations of the past six months have been sanctioned; how many have been refused; and how many are still awaiting sanction.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): As regards the Regular Forces there are two classes of officers concerned, those who resign and those who retire voluntarily on pension or gratuity. Resignations are always accepted by the War Office unless the officer has committed an offence necessitating removal; none have been refused. Retirements, however, cannot always be accepted forthwith, as some are only permissible on the understanding that the officer joins the Militia or Yeomanry, and a little delay sometimes occurs on the officer's part in securing nomination for such services; there are eight cases awaiting sanction for this reason. As regards the Auxiliary Forces all details in connection with resignations are now carried out by General Officers Commanding in Chief, and the figures only of those sanctioned are available. The figures available are as follows—

	Six months ending 28th February, 1903.		Six months ending 28th February, 1904.		Six months ending 28th February, 1905.	
	Retirements.	Resignations.	Retirements.	Resignations	Retirements.	Resignations
Regulars	170	152	129	136	140	134
Militia	—	181	—	159	—	116
Volunteers	—	662	—	465	—	463

Strength of the Volunteer Force under the New Army Scheme.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the estimated actual strength of the Volunteer force under the new scheme, with a reduced establishment of 230,000 men.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In reply to this Question any estimate could only be given very approximately. It is probable that with an establishment of 230,000 the corresponding strength will eventually be about 200,000.

Army Officers and Colour Blindness.

Mr. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether inability to distinguish colours is no longer to be a bar to the granting of commissions in His Majesty's Army.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir. In accordance with the recommendations of the medical authorities, it has been decided to return to the former practice under which colour blindness was not regarded as a disqualification for a commission in the Army.

Army Wastages—War Office Committee of Inquiry—Terms of Reference.

Sir JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what are the terms of reference to the War Office Committee presided over by Sir William Butler with respect to the South African stores contracts; and will the evidence given before such Committee in due course be laid before Parliament.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The terms of reference were as follows:—(1) To investigate and report on the terms of contract and other circumstances connected with sales and refunds to contractors in South Africa at the end of the war. (2) To make special inquiry into certain transactions. (3) To report upon the responsibility of those concerned. The Committee is a Departmental one and the evidence given before such a Committee is usually treated as confidential. I am not, therefore, at present in a position to state whether an exception to the usual rule can be made in this particular case.

Militia and the Short-Service Army.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how the consent of the Militia to be included in the short-service Army is to be ascertained.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This question does not immediately arise. I am not, therefore, prepared to give a precise reply to it. It is not anticipated that there will be any difficulty in ascertaining the views of individual officers or men. In the event of a change being made, those not desiring to accept the new terms of service will continue to serve under the existing engagements until their termination.

Argyll and Sutherland Regiment.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can say when the Argyll and Sutherland Battalion, at present stationed at Longmoor, will be removed to other quarters; and when he expects to be able to transfer them to Scotland.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This battalion will leave Longmoor for Chatham this autumn at the conclusion of the drill season. It is not possible to say when the battalion will be transferred to Scotland.

Small Arms Factories Return.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state when the House may expect to have the Return as to the Small Arms Factories, called for by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham and the hon. Member for East Herts; and whether it will be contrary to Rule 80 of the Ordnance Factory Rules for the employees of the Government factories to discuss the Return in question.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The Return was in the hands of Members on the 5th instant. Rule 80 of the Ordnance Factory Rules only relates to the method of preferring complaints. If the employees of the Government factories have any complaints which arise out of the Return in question, it is open to them to prefer them in the usual manner in accordance with that rule.

Sparkbrook Factory Discharges.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, looking at the distress which exists at Sparkbrook consequent on the discharges of workmen, he will consider the possibility of giving such additional orders to the factory as may be necessary to prevent any increase of such distress.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The statement that was made in reply to a similar Question put on the 5th instant† concerning Enfield will also apply to Sparkbrook. Every effort will be made to prevent any increase of distress, but it is not possible to give work beyond the money available for payment of wages.

Shipments of Australian Jam to South Africa.

*MR. MOSS (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state from what port or ports, and on what date or dates, and on what ship or ships, the 1,350,816 tins of jam, referred to in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, were shipped for the South African War; and if he will state whether each tin was deficient to the extent of four ounces in the pound respectively, or whether the four ounces merely represents an average deficiency per tin of the whole quantity.

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† See page 451.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: It is not possible to trace the particulars asked for. The average weight of jam contained in a nominal one pound tin is approximately fourteen ounces.

Tasmanian Jam Contracts for South Africa.

*__Mr. MOSS__: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any, and if any what, quantity of tins of jam were shipped to South Africa during the war by Messrs. Jones Brothers, of Hobart, Tasmania, and by Messrs. Peacock Brothers, of the same place; and whether these firms or either of them supplied any and what proportion of the 1,350,816 tins referred to in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General as containing twelve ounces only, instead of one pound.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Jam from Australia was supplied by H. Jones & Co. and W. D. Peacock & Co., of Hobart, Tasmania. It is impossible to say whether any of the jam supplied by these firms formed part of the 1,350,816 tins referred to.

Enfield Small Arms Factory.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state whether the authorities at Enfield Small Arms Factory will consider the advisability of employing men in overhauling machinery that has become defective in consequence of the pressure of work which took place during the South African War, with a view to preventing further discharges.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The suggestion which is contained in the hon. and gallant Member's Question has not been, and will not be, lost sight of. But the class of labour required for such repairs is in many cases not the same as that which may have to be dispensed with, and, as I have already explained, it is not possible to provide work in excess of the money available.

The Earthquake in India—Official Information.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can state the number of casualties caused by the recent earthquakes and landslides in India, and also what steps the Government proposes to take to relieve the suffering caused by these disasters.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for India what official information he has received up to date regarding the recent earthquake in India; and if he can state particulars regarding the loss of life and property, giving the names of those who have died or been seriously injured.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The names of those who, up to this morning, are reported by the Government of India to have been killed or injured have been communicated to the Press, but it is feared that the list is still incomplete. The mortality among natives is not yet known, but the following casualties among Ghurkha regiments at Dharmsala have been reported:—Killed, 140 (including women, children, and followers); injured 186; missing, 71. I have received the following particulars from the Government of India dated the 9th last:—"In Lahore, twenty-five natives killed and considerable damage done to private and public property. In Amritsar, Golden Temple damaged and some lives lost. At Tarn Taran, nine killed and seven severely injured. At Dalhousie, damage to property but no deaths. Palampur in Kangra District reported totally destroyed, and many hundred lives lost. Very serious damage also reported in Kangra and Jowala Mukhi and other villages in Kangra Valley. Every building, without exception, in Kangra and Bhawan in ruins, including Sessions House and Mission buildings. The Kangra Treasury has collapsed and treasure boxes lying under *debris*. Of police, only Deputy-Inspector of Police, one sergeant, and one constable uninjured, and three other constables alive, but injured. Of Tahsil Establishment, only office kanungo and two chaprassies, of whom one is uninjured, and alive. Total number estimated to be alive is 500. Many people still alive are imprisoned in ruined houses. Similar state of affairs in most other villages in neighbourhood. At Dharmsala all houses and buildings throughout the entire station, including cantonment and bazaars, have been totally destroyed with enormous loss of life. Relief party with doctors, medicine, food, and tents sent from Lahore on 5th April. A double company of 34th Pioneers also left Mian Mir on 7th April to render assistance at Dharmsala, Palampur, Kangra, and other places in Kangra Valley. Two more companies are being sent, and two or three Pioneer Companies are being sent from Umballa. Military authorities have been asked to hold other forces in readiness to send if necessary. An Assistant District Superintendent of police with 200 constables are being sent to protect property and to take place of constables killed. No further information at present." This morning the Viceroy telegraphs as follows:—"Latest information from Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab does not add to details already wired. It is clear that towns of Dharmsala, Kangra, and Palampur are virtually destroyed, that loss of life has been very great, and that full measure of catastrophe, owing to difficulty of communication, cannot be ascertained for some time. I have only desisted from proceeding at once to scene of disaster at urgent request of Lieutenant-Governor, who will go there himself." In reply to a question from me as to opening a relief list the Viceroy adds, "I am starting Indian subscription list for sufferers whose losses it will be impossible to meet from other sources, and in a day or two, when fuller information has reached me, I hope to be able to tell you whether we should also appeal to wider circle. I think that this may be necessary. Commissioner further reports that at Dharmsala, owing to splendid work of Ghurkhas and others, nearly all bodies have already been exhumed. Special party been despatched to visit all tea estates round Palampur and similar parties in other directions. Police report from Kulu shows some loss of life there, but no European casualties reported. In Kangra nearly all Government native clerks have perished.'

China and the Tibetan Treaty.

Mr. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Chinese Ambassador has expressed adhesion to the Tibetan treaty; if not, whether any modifications have been suggested; and what portion of Tibet is now occupied by British troops.

Mr. BRODRICK: I have as yet received no report from the Government of India on the negotiations which are proceeding with the Chinese Plenipotentiary on the subject of the adhesion of China to the Tibetan treaty. The only part of Tibet occupied by British troops is Chumbi, where two and a half companies of native infantry are stationed. The British trade agent at Gyangtse has an escort of fifty men.

Monasteries in the United Kingdom.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the number of monasteries and convents in the United Kingdom, apart from Ireland, has increased from fifty-two in 1850 to 990 in 1904; and, if so, whether he will reconsider the need for their inspection.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): There are no official statistics, as I said in my reply to the hon. Member on March 13th.† I am not prepared to take any action with a view to the inspection of monasteries and convents generally.

Aliens Bill.

Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet made any estimate of the probable cost to the Exchequer of the proposed Aliens Bill, and what the cost of administering it will be.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: An estimate is in course of preparation, but it would be premature to make any statement on the subject at present. I will be ready to state the figures during the debate on the Aliens Bill.

Musical Piracy.

Sir ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the continued growth of musical piracy; and whether he is prepared to give facilities for the introduction of remedial legislation on the subject.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1203.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I do not see my way to introduce a Bill on Musical Copyright this year, and as to special facilities being given for a private Member's Bill—that is a question for the First Lord of the Treasury.

SIR ANDREW AGNEW: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a leading firm have been obliged to give up publishing because they can get no protection under the present law?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have seen a statement to that effect in the Press, but I must adhere to my Answer that I cannot attempt legislation myself, unless I can have substantial assurance that the Bill will be considered a non-contentious or agreed Bill.

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.): If a private Member introduces a Bill will the right hon. Gentleman use his influence with the Prime Minister to get facilities for it?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No, Sir. I could not promise my influence to place such a Bill before Government Bills of perhaps greater general importance.

Precautions against Rabies.

SIR ANDREW AGNEW: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can announce any modification in the Orders prohibiting the admission of dogs from abroad into the United Kingdom.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): If my hon. friend would communicate with me as to the particular modifications which he would suggest should be made in our Orders, I should be glad to consider them. As he is doubtless aware, those Orders do not absolutely prohibit the landing of dogs brought from abroad, but they prescribe certain conditions designed to afford a full measure of security against the reintroduction of rabies into Great Britain.

Motor-Car Regulations.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to the decision of the Appeal Court, in the case of the Wokingham Magistrates *v.* the Earl of Craven, in which it was decided that the owner of a motor-car is not compelled to disclose the name of the driver of the car in cases of furious driving; and if he will take steps to prevent the abuse of the roads by those who have no consideration for the public; and, also, if he is aware that Lord Craven was himself driving the car at the time of the offence.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have seen the report in *The Times* of the hearing of this case in the Divisional Court, but I have no other information on the subject, and I do not know who was driving the motor-car on the occasion referred to in the Question. From the report in *The Times*, I do not gather that the decision was to the effect stated by my hon. friend. The conviction appears to have been quashed on the ground of its uncertainty, in that it did not sufficiently allege that an offence had been committed by the driver. It might, as I understand, have been upheld if the reference in it to the rule in the regulations had been omitted, and it had been alleged that the driver had offended against Sub-section (1) of Section 1 of the Act. The case does not seem to me to show that the existing law is in itself defective.

Post Office—Scales of Pay.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what reason he can urge for reducing the maximum of the scale of sorting clerks and telegraphists in certain towns from 50s. to 48s. per week under his new scheme, in view of the discontent existing in the service and in view of the evidence given before the Bradford Committee.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): After careful consideration I came to the conclusion that the retention of the class rising to 50s. a week is no longer necessary, the scale rising to 48s. being adequate for most of the offices in that class. I am considering whether the circumstances are such as to warrant some of the offices being transferred to the higher class, with a maximum of 52s. Officers at present on the scale rising to 50s., will, of course, retain the right to that maximum.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has the noble Lord ever heard of such a thing as the Bradford Report?

Lord STANLEY: Yes, Sir.

Dingwall Postal Arrangements.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that letters and newspapers posted in Dingwall on Wednesday night, or early on Thursday morning, are not despatched to Glasgow or Edinburgh by the first train leaving for the South at 7.30 a.m., but are kept until the 9.40 a.m. train, with the result that they are frequently not delivered until Friday morning; and will he consider the expediency of arranging for a despatch from Dingwall by the earlier or both trains.

Lord STANLEY: Inquiry is being made on the question of instituting a despatch of mails from Dingwall to Glasgow and Edinburgh by the 7.30 a.m. train, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member when the inquiry is completed.

Copyright in America.

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if any concession on the question of copyright has been notified by the Government of the United States of America.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfrairs); The Answer is in the negative.

Dangers of Live Rails.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the public danger caused by the laying down of exposed rails charged with high electric currents without due safeguards; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take to prevent the danger of loss of life.

Mr. BONAR LAW: Yes, Sir, the Board of Trade are fully alive to the dangers which may arise from this method of traction unless it is adequately safeguarded. As stated in a reply to a Question put by the hon. Member for the Cleveland Division of Yorkshire on the 7th ultimo,† recommendations as to the steps to be taken to prevent accidents from contact with such rails have been made from time to time to railway companies and have been adopted by them, and the matter is one that receives unremitting consideration from the inspecting officers of the Department in the course of their duties.

Royal Naval Reserve—Boy Sailors.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the fact that 4,326 boy sailors were enrolled in the Royal Naval Reserve under the scheme of 1898, which expired on March 31st, and to the probability that under the simpler scheme of a capitation grant for each boy carried, as recently proposed by the Admiralty and Board of Trade, the number of such enrolments would be greatly increased, he will say in what way effect is now to be given to the policy of encouraging the training of British boys for the mercantile marine and as a Reserve for the Royal Navy.

Mr. BONAR LAW: I am not in a position to promise that the scheme will be revived in any form, but I fully sympathise with the objects for which it was framed, and I will take an opportunity of discussing the subject generally with my hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty.

London Pupil Teachers and Vaccination—Miss Eames' Case.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is now aware that Miss Eames recently gained a London County Council probationary scholarship for training as a pupil teacher at the Girls' Grammar School, Lewisham, and that after she had been at the school three months she was informed by the chairman of the education committee of the County Council that they would be compelled, under the regulations of the Board of Education, to cancel her scholarship unless she passed a medical examination showing that she had been vaccinated; and, seeing that Miss Eames was not aware that this condition would be imposed at the time she competed for the scholarship, will he consider the expediency of relaxing the rule.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 573.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The Board have received no application on behalf of Miss Eames, and my knowledge of the case is confined to a newspaper cutting kindly sent to me by the hon. Member. I see no reason for an alteration of the rule in question; it was laid down by the Board after careful consideration.

Instruction in Swimming in Elementary Schools.

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Board recognise lessons in swimming, given under proper conditions, as part of the minimum time constituting a school attendance for the purpose of Parliamentary grant.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Board recognise lessons in swimming, under proper conditions, as part of the minimum time constituting a school attendance for the purpose of Parliamentary grant in respect of public elementary schools, but the time devoted to such lessons must not be included in the minimum time devoted to physical training.

Education Return.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he will grant the Return relating to Education, notice of which stands on to-day's Paper.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I have communicated with the other departments concerned and I find that in the case of some of the heads of the Return asked for no information can be given, and in the case of others the only figures available would be of a misleading kind; but in any case the system of education and the methods of awarding Parliamentary grants differ so widely in the different parts of the United Kingdom that any comparative tables would only produce erroneous conclusions. Under the circumstances I am afraid that the Return cannot be granted.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman give the amounts actually voted by Parliament for the three grades of education?

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I have nothing to add to my Answer.

The Return referred to was follows:—

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Elementary Education, total State grant for ordinary day schools - - - - -			
2. Cost of administration and inspection - -			
3. Pupils on roll - - - - - - -			
4. Average daily attendance - - - -			
5. Cost per pupil in average daily attendance -			
6. Number of schools - - - - -			
7. Number of certificated teachers - - -			
8. Average salary of teachers - - - -			
9. Total rates and voluntary contributions -			
10. Total State grant for Secondary Education -			
11. Number of pupils in average attendance -			
12. Cost per pupil to State - - - - -			
13. Total State grants for Universities and Colleges			
14. Total number of pupils - - - - -			
15. Average cost per student to State - - -			
16 Total grants for all purposes from State -			
17. Average per head of population - - -			

Buckingham Palace—New Roadway.

Colonel LUCAS (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if the new road leading from the front of Buckingham Palace to Piccadilly is to be used for vehicular traffic.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The Answer is in the negative.

Colonel LUCAS: I hope the noble Lord will adhere to that decision.

Medical Attendance in the House.

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether there is within the precincts of the House any medicine chest for use in the case of accident or sudden illness; if so, where is it kept; who is responsible for its custody and the replenishment of the stores; and when these stores were last inspected.

Lord BALCARRES: This is not a matter in which the First Commissioner has any jurisdiction. It appears to be one for the authorities of the House.

Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON: But is there not a medicine chest somewhere in the House?

Lord BALCARRES: Yes, one is kept in the department of the police.

Dr. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye): Who has charge of it?

Lord BALCARRES: The key is kept by the constable on duty in the room, and he has instructions to allow nobody to open the chest except a duly authorised medical man.

Protection of Scottish Line Fishermen's Interests.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether, with a view to the purchase of an additional Fishery Board cruiser for the protection of the interests of the line fishermen, the Secretary for Scotland is saving moneys out of funds placed at his disposal for fishery purposes; and, if so, will he state what amount has accumulated.

*The LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): Money is being saved which may be available for the purpose of the purchase of another cruiser. The amount so accumulated at present stands at over £7,000.

Return Relating to Government Officials in Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury by what methods it is intended to ascertain the place of education of each salaried official in the various Government Departments in Ireland; if it is open to every such official to decline to furnish such information as being solely personal to himself; and, if not, to what penalty will he be liable in the event of his refusal.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): Perhaps I may be permitted to reply to this Question. In all cases where this information has not already been furnished to the Department on the occasion of the appointment, promotion, or transfer of an official, the only method which the Government could be expected to resort to, to obtain it, would be to ask the official to supply it. I am advised that the Government have no legal right to make such a demand, and that if they made it the official applied to would have every right to decline to accede to the demand. It was in consequence of these reasons that I declined to assent to the Return in the first instance.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I ask whether, as the House of Commons has ordered this Return, the Government will take steps to have the order enforced?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I can only say I have taken the legal advice at my disposal, and the Answer I have given is the result of that advice. I have no power to obtain the information, nor has the head of the Department.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say for what reason he withdrew his objection to the Return?

MR. WALTER LONG: I never did withdraw my objection to the Return. The Motion came on unexpectedly at five minutes to twelve o'clock, when neither I nor the law officers were in the House. In consequence, the Return was ordered by the House. A Motion had been put on the Paper by the Secretary to the Treasury for the rejection of the Return, but it did not seem possible to secure an opportunity for the debate. Therefore, I undertook that, so far as I was able to do so, the information should be provided.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any reason to suppose that these officials are ashamed to give this information?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have not the slightest reason to suppose anything of the kind. I assume they are entitled to their rights and privileges as much as anybody else.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) May I ask the Chief Secretary whether any officer refusing to supply this information will do so at his own risk?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of any further Question.

Lamphier Estate, County Tipperary.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that in connection with the sale of the Lamphier Estate, at Forlacummin Slievardagh, county Tipperary, the evicted tenants, Messrs. Feehan and M'Cormac, in making application for their reinstatement acted in good faith, as they had never assigned their interests in their farms to any person, and that the fact of giving the supposed expenses of the sheriff in the contemplated eviction has been utilised by the owner as a reason for giving over the tenancies to another man for the sum of £230; and will he see that the Estates Commissioners take steps to reinstate these evicted tenants.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply of 23rd March†. These persons are not evicted tenants, and have no claim to reinstatement.

Phibbs Estate, County Sligo.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he now state whether the purchase arrangements of the Phibbs Estate of Heathfield, situate near Collooney, county Sligo, have yet been sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, will he say whether these arrangements include the enlargement of uneconomic holdings by the addition of a portion of the waste land on the estate from which the tenants or their predecessors were evicted.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir. Until the inspector's final report has been received, the information desired in the second part of the Question cannot be given.

Window Smashing at Templemore, County Tipperary.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the extra police were withdrawn from Barnane, near Templemore, county Tipperary, in face of the allegation that about six weeks ago a window was smashed in daylight in the house of George Thompson, for whose protection those extra constabulary-men had been brought there; is he aware that George Thompson goes in day after day to Templemore doing his business unaccompanied by police; and under the circumstances will he direct that an open investigation be held in regard to the breaking of Mr. Thompson's window.

MR. WALTER LONG: The extra police were withdrawn in August, 1903, and will be returned to the district should the local responsible authorities consider such a step necessary. The police are pursuing their inquiries, and the reply to the concluding inquiry is in the negative.

Congested Districts Board Purchases in County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether representations have been made to the Congested Districts Board by all the representative persons in the district where the Cragg and Adcrone farms purchased by the Board are situated, to the effect that it will lead to discontent and trouble if any attempt is made to import new tenants into these farms while the evicted tenants are on the spot and desirous of being reinstated; and if he can make any arrangement by which the Board can give back these farms to Mrs. Esther Cronin and Mr. John M. Lyne, the persons evicted from them.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 969.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not aware whether such representations have been received, but, in any event, they would not affect the decision which has been arrived at. The Board purchased these farms for the purpose of migration; and it would be against public policy to reinstate the ex-tenants, who are defaulting annuitants.

Reinstatement of County Kerry Evicted Tenants.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Estates Commissioners to take any steps in reference to the reinstatement of evicted tenants in county Kerry until such time as the entire estates from which they were evicted come before them for sale; whether he is aware that such procedure will entail in many cases years of delay to the evicted tenants; and whether, under these circumstances, he will give directions to the Estates Commissioners to open negotiations with the landlords and others for the reinstatement of evicted tenants, and report the result of such negotiations in due course.

MR. WALTER LONG: Under Section 2 of the Act of 1903, the restoration of evicted tenants is ancillary to the sale of an estate and an incident in its disposal. The practice regulating the reinstatement of such tenants was explained in the recent debates on the subject; and in the regulations which it is intended to lay on the Table the matter will be further dealt with.

Mr. Hughes' Estate in Queen's County.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the estate of Mr. Theodore Augustin Hughes, situate in the Queen's County, has been sold to the tenants under the provisions of the Land Act of 1903; that there were upon the estate two sub-tenants named Mary Whelan and Johanna Higgins who had the *status* of judicial tenants and had had judicial rents fixed, who claimed to be entitled to purchase their farms under the 15th Section of the Land Purchase Act of 1903; and that the result of the negotiations upon the question was that the estate was sold, leaving these two judicial sub-tenants still in the occupation of tenancies on the estate; and, if so, will he say what power, if any, the Estates Commissioners enjoyed to sell the tenancies held by these sub-tenants to another tenant on the estate, and vest the same in such other tenant, as that is what, in effect, has been done or sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners.

MR. WALTER LONG: The persons named are sub-tenants on the holding of Thomas Walpole. By direction of the Commissioners, the vendor offered to sell to these sub-tenants the land occupied by them. The offers were refused, and the entire holding has been vested in Walpole.

Irish School House Plans.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the revised estimates and plans for new school houses in Ireland are yet in the hands of the Commissioners of National Education; and, if so, when will the approved plans be carried into practical operation.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I regret that I have nothing to add at present to the various replies I have already given to Questions on this subject.

Major Mahony's Estate, County Kerry.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any negotiations for the purchase of the estate of Major Mahony, near Caragh, county Kerry, have been instituted by the Congested Districts Board or the Estates Commissioners; and can he state whether the application of Daniel Clifford, an evicted tenant on the estate, has been considered.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Board are considering the question of making an offer for this estate. The Commissioners have received an application from Mr. Clifford, which they will consider if the estate should come before them.

Rev. R. Barmingham's Estate, County Roscommon.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any negotiations are taking place between the Estates Commissioners and the Rev. R. Barmingham as to the estate of the latter in Roscommon; if so, how far these negotiations have proceeded; and whether, in view of the fact that there is a quantity of untenanted land on the estate, the proceedings for its acquisition will be expedited as much as possible.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners understand that an originating request for the sale of this estate is about to be lodged with them.

French Estate, County Roscommon.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any negotiations are in progress between the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board and the owner of the French Estate, Clooneyquin, in the county Roscommon; if so, how the matter now stands; and whether, as this estate contains a quantity of untenanted land and adjoins a number of uneconomic holdings, the purchase proceedings will be pushed forward without delay.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Congested Districts Board are negotiating for the purchase of this estate.

Kilmeedy Schools.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what reply did the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland give on December 8th, 1903, to the application of the manager of the Kilmeedy, county Limerick, Schools, for a grant-in-aid to build new schools there.

Mr. WALTER LONG: There is no record of a reply dated December 8th, 1903. I have sent to the hon. Member a copy of the Commissioners' reply of the 9th of that month.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Names in Irish on Carts.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary has directed the members of the force not to prosecute cases of persons who have inscribed their names in the Gaelic language on their business vehicles; and, if so, what are the reasons for giving certain persons exemption from compliance with the law.

Mr. WALTER LONG: My hon. friend has not been correctly informed. No exemption has been granted, but the Inspector-General has directed that cases of the kind shall be reported to headquarters for instructions before instituting a prosecution. I understand that a case is pending for the opinion of the Superior Courts as to the legality of the practice.

New Education Rule 127 (b).

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have yet been able to ascertain what will be the probable effects of Rule 127 (b) if an attempt is made to enforce it.

Mr. WALTER LONG: As I have already stated, I intend to investigate this matter during the Easter recess, and would therefore ask the hon. Member to defer the Question for the present.

Gurteenrainee Farm, County Tipperary.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Admiral Poe has offered to sell the evicted farm of the late Kyran M'Donnell, situated at Gurteenrainee, barony of Slievardagh, county Tipperary, to the present occupier, through the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, will he state under what tenure the party in possession at present holds the farm; how the tenancy was created after Mr. M'Donnell's eviction; and whether the son of the evicted tenant, Philip M'Donnell, has lodged his claim for reinstatement with the Estates Commissioners.

MR. WALTER LONG: Philip M'Donnell's application has been received by the Commissioners, but the estate has not come before them, and they have no information as to the tenancy of the evicted holding.

Malicious Damage Claims at Limerick.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that upon the hearing of two claims by farmers for compensation for malicious destruction of hay, at Limerick Quarter Sessions last week, Head Constable Doherty expressed the opinion that the hay was burned on behalf of the applicant, whereas County Court Judge Adams rejected that opinion, which he said was unsupported by any tittle of evidence and awarded the claimant compensation; and whether, with the view of preserving the independence of the Constabulary, he will direct a full inquiry to be made into the circumstances under which the police officer made these unfounded allegations.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Head Constable only expressed the opinion complained of after he had been pressed to do so by the Judge. The police are instructed, when giving evidence in such cases, to claim privilege if their answer would interfere with the administration of justice. I am advised that the Head Constable would have been justified in claiming privilege in this case and declining to make a grave criminal charge on suspicion. I am making further inquiry into the matter.

The Estates Commissioners—Instructions to Inspectors.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table the instructions issued by the Estates Commissioners for the guidance of their inspectors, dated February, 1904.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir, I do not propose to lay these instructions, which were informal, on the Table.

MR. DILLON: Then are we not to be allowed to see these instructions at all?

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs) asked whether it was not the intention that all these regulations should be brought under the cognisance of the House.

MR. WALTER LONG said he had no desire to do other than carry out the pledges of his predecessor.

MR. DILLON: I shall certainly press for the publication of these regulations.

Belfast Mail Service.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the comparatively small cost of sending a supplementary mail bag from Belfast via Greenore to London and the expressed desire of the railway companies to give facilities for such a service, he will make further inquiries into the matter with the view of complying with this demand.

LORD STANLEY: As I have already informed the hon. Member, I am endeavouring to arrange for an improvement of the present mail service from Belfast to England by way of Larne, and I do not consider it worth while to take up the question of using the Greenore route unless an acceleration of the Larne service proves to be impracticable.

Armagh Post Office—Catholic Clerk's Grievance.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a Catholic member of the female staff at Armagh Post Office requested one hour's leave of absence during the morning of last St. Patrick's Day in order to attend her place of worship and was refused it by the postmaster, although all the available staff were at work and a capable substitute was willing to act for her; and whether, seeing no facilities are afforded the Catholic officers in Armagh for attending divine service on holidays, he will take steps to prevent a recurrence of this state of things.

LORD STANLEY: I am informed that a member of the female staff at Armagh Post Office asked for two hours leave of absence on the 17th of March (St. Patrick's Day) at a time when a good deal of extra work was expected at the office. She did not say for what purpose the leave was required, nor did she offer to provide a substitute; and she was informed by the postmaster that she could not be spared.

Aghalee Postal Arrangements.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, owing to the postal arrangements in the rural district of Aghalee, county Antrim, the daily newspaper cannot be had until the day after publication; and that the only delivery from the post offices of Aghalee, Aghagallon, and Lower Ballinderry, county Antrim, Ireland, takes place at 6 a.m.; and, if so, will he undertake that better postal facilities be provided for the people of that district.

LORD STANLEY: It is the fact that newspapers published in Dublin or Belfast cannot be delivered by post the same day at the places mentioned. I regret, however, that no improvement is practicable as the cost of the present service is so high as to preclude me from incurring additional expenditure for a second post in the day. The present delivery, as the hon. Member states, begins at 6 a.m., and it would be necessary to postpone it for at least five hours if the newspapers in question had to be included.

Killarney—Rail and Hotel Tickets.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether it is permissible for the Great Southern and Western Railway Company of Ireland to issue combined rail and hotel tickets to Killarney to one hotel under private management at preferential rates, having regard to the sums paid to this railway company by the ratepayers of the county Kerry in baronial guarantees.

MR. BONAR LAW: The hon. Member asks a difficult legal Question upon which I am not in a position to express an opinion.

Treatment of Native Races.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the recent allegations with reference to the ill-treatment of native races in Australia, in India, in Nigeria, in South Africa, as well as in the Philippines, and in French, German, Congo State, Portuguese territories, and elsewhere, His Majesty's Government will take steps to secure the appointment of an International Commission to inquire into all these matters, and to bring forward recommendations to alleviate the condition of the native races generally.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to the hon. Gentleman I have to say I do not think anything would be gained by entering into diplomatic negotiations with other Powers for the purpose of assembling a Conference on this subject.

Scotch Education Bill.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury on what day the Second Reading of the Scotch Education Bill will be taken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope to be able to read the Bill a second time next week, possibly on Tuesday, but I cannot say definitely.

Scottish Peers and the Franchise.

MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that there are only thirty-two Scottish Peers who are not hereditary Peers of Parliament, sixteen of whom are representative Peers, while the remaining sixteen are debarred from entering either House, are without the franchise, and are not permitted to participate in a Parliamentary election, he will, under any Redistribution scheme, consider the desirability of removing these disabilities by placing Scottish Peers on the same footing as Irish Peers, and thus conferring on certain persons in Scotland the political privileges enjoyed by the people at large.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR was understood to say that a question relating to the *status* of Scottish Peers could hardly be dealt with in a Bill in the manner suggested by the hon. Member.

Management of Queen Anne's Bounty and the Ecclesiastical Commission.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any of the beneficed parochial clergy are at the present time Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, or take any part in its management or in that of the Ecclesiastical Commission; and, if not, whether it would be possible to alter or remedy this as to either body without an Act of Parliament.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that in order to alter the constitution of Queen Anne's Bounty it would be necessary either to have legislation or to have a new charter, and that with regard to the Ecclesiastical Commission legislation is absolutely necessary. In these circumstances I think any reform of these two bodies ought to be undertaken together by legislation. My right hon. friend will be aware that there was a Joint Committee of the two Houses to look into the constitution of these two bodies and that the Committee recommended their amalgamation.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the situation created in various parts of Scotland by the actions of the Legal Free Church, who have practically ignored the fact that a Royal Commisson is reporting, he will introduce a short Bill to maintain the *status quo* until the Report of the Royal Commission has been received and a decision come to by this House in regard to the whole matters at issue.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already more than once expressed my views upon this subject, and I have informed the House how much I regret the action which has been taken in certain cases with reference to the first of the two Commissions appointed by His Majesty's Government. I do not think, however, the course suggested by the hon. Gentleman of having interim legislation is at all practicable. All we can do is to do our best to bring forward such legislative project as soon as we have before us the Report of the Elgin Commission, which Report, I trust, will not be long delayed.

Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to resolutions by the Convention of Royal Burghs in Scotland, and by many meetings of fishermen at Buckie and elsewhere on the coast, condemning the fishing, by trawlers registered in foreign ports within forbidden waters; and whether the Government will take steps, by affording facilities for the Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill or otherwise, for remedying the alleged grievance.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The question is one of very great difficulty, raising questions of domestic importance as well as of policy in connection with our relations with foreign Powers, and I do not think in the present state of public business I can promise the hon. Member what he asks for.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. WALLACE (Perth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of notices to give up possession of their manses on May 28th being served on ministers of the United Free Church of Scotland, the Government will take immediate action on the Elgin Report, and, if necessary, will introduce a suspensory Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, may I inquire whether the Government has recently received the Elgin Report and whether, if it is not so, the House may take it that, at the earliest moment after it has been received, the Government will legislate on the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We have not received the Elgin Report. I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman what he means by "the earliest possible moment." I presume the Elgin Report will not only deserve, but require, consideration, and until we have given it that consideration legislation would be premature.

MR. BUCHANAN: May I ask whether, if there is to be a delay in carrying out the recommendations of the Elgin Commission, the right hon. Gentleman will consider the propriety of passing suspensory legislation, especially in view of the recent action taken in regard to the eviction from manses in Scotland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The supplementary Question of the hon. Gentleman is of a hypothetical character, and the particular hypothesis on which he goes is that we shall not be able to introduce legislation based on the recommendations of the Elgin Commission. I should hope that that will not be the case; but if it is the case I shall be glad to consider any alternative course which may be open to us under those circumstances.

Army Recruiting.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Defence Committee approve of a double system of recruiting necessitated by foreign-service and short-service Armies; and will he allow the House, without the intervention of the Government Whips, to express its opinion of the scheme.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is a question which would not come before the Defence Committee at all: it is entirely in the Departmental province of the Secretary of State for War.

MR. LAMBERT: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman reply to the second part of my Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the hon. Gentleman suggest that any question dealing with the Army and Navy is not to be under the direction of the Government? Because I cannot assent to that.

London Rates.

MR. BENN (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the rise in the rates levied by the borough councils of London, especially in poorer districts, he will cause an inquiry to be held into the cause or need of this increase and the possibility of further equalising the burden over the whole of London.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that a considerable rise in the rates which has taken place in the County of London is being inquired into by the Local Government Board. Legislation would be required to carry out the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: Will any steps be taken, by legislation or otherwise, to prevent the enormous borrowing that is going on.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I do not think it would be possible by legislation to prevent that; at any rate no scheme for preventing it has ever been brought to my notice. This, like other questions connected with local finance, must in the last resort be left to the good sense and discretion of the ratepayers. If the ratepayers do not pay attention to their duties, no doubt not only considerable local but national inconvenience will arise.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: Is it not the fact that in many cities there is a limit put to the amount which can be borrowed.

[No Answer was returned.]

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) BILL.

Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

NEW BILLS.

MORTGAGE OF PREMISES BILL.

"To amend the Law in regard to the Mortgaging of Premises containing trade machinery," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 157.]

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.

"To provide for the registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange, and to allow summary judgment thereon," presented by Sir William Holland; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 158.]

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To make further provision towards the prevention of Infectious Diseases in Ireland, presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time Tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 159.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WAYS AND MEANS).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if under consideration at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 235; Noes. 181. (Division List No. 128.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Midd's'x
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropshire
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, T. L. (Down, N.)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dimsdale, Rt Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt Hon. A. Akers-
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords. N. W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H. (Somers't, E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kennaway, Rt Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbighs
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir H. Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawson, Hn H. L. W, (Mile End)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N. R)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir E. (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)

Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, R. J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H. C. (Nort'mb, Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Rt Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Sir Frederick (Bristol, N.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Char. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice, Capt E C (S. Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay Alexander (Lanark, NE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharpe
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, P. J. (Westmeath, N.)
Kennedy, Vincent (P. Gavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas

Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick, A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North,)
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt Hon. J. (Montrose)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipp'rary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor, (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, J. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, David
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tenant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, G. (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Lloyd-George and Mr. McCrae.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

*The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): In rising to make the Budget statement for another year I cannot but recall the singular kindness which the Committee showed to me a year ago, and I venture to hope that they will extend to me a similar indulgence on the present occasion. Happily, the account which I have now to give of the national finances is less unfavourable than that which it was my duty to present a year ago. At that time the year which had just closed had resulted in a heavy deficit, and the resources of our then existing taxation were inadequate, not merely to make good any part of the realised deficiencies, but even to meet the requirements of the estimated expenditure of the new year. To-day I meet the Committee under happier auspices. The results of the past year, though lending no support to the exaggerated expectations which, I fear, have been formed in many quarters, are at least sufficient to show that we have turned the corner, and that we have done something more than establish an equilibrium between expenditure and revenue.

THE RESOURCES OF THE YEAR 1904–5.

The year 1904–5 was one of varying fortunes. It began badly, and in the earlier portion of the year it seemed as if our hopes were once again doomed to disappointment. Fortunately, as time went on the prospects improved. A new and bountiful crop of cotton has effaced the shortage of the previous year and has brought a rush of work and employment in the great Lancashire industry which depends upon the plentiful supply of that staple not merely for its prosperity, but almost for its very existence. Shipbuilding, which had experienced a period of sharp depression, is now showing some signs of recovery. The shipping trade itself, though still continuing depressed, and though freights remain very low, is, I think, also showing some indication of a better state of things, of which we may, perhaps, detect the first effect in the considerable orders for new ships which have lately been placed. The same intelligent anticipation of a better future is to be found in the slight improvement in the iron and steel trade which was noticeable in the closing months of last year and the earlier months of the present year. For these industries, with the shipping trade, provide the instruments of production and distribution, and are the first to feel the effect of any rise or fall in the commercial barometer. They are, therefore, some indication of the opinion entertained by those most competent to judge with regard to the trade prospects of the immediate future. The reviving prosperity of South Africa is another circumstance in our favour; and the prospect of cheaper money and the moderate recovery which has recently taken place in the price of securities have served to give some elasticity to our revenue from stamps, and have gone some way to make good the fall which took place in the early portion of the year in the revenue derived from the death duties. But, though we may take some comfort from these indications of a better state of things, and though we may hope that we are recovering from the depression which began in 1901, and are on the path of a moderate but steady recovery, it cannot be said that the year 1904–5 was a satisfactory one, either from the point of view of commerce and industry, or from the point of view of finance. In many of our staple trades the depression of the previous year was continued and even accentuated in 1904. I have again to chronicle the absence of any serious labour disputes, which is due in large part to the growing use of boards of conciliation and sliding scales to adjust wages questions. But employment again declined and wages fell in sympathy. Altogether it would appear that 1904 was a worse year both for employment and trade than any of its immediate predecessors, and the accumulated effects of the depression of recent years are visible in the marked increase of pauperism and distress which the past winter has witnessed. It was only in the concluding months of the year that any indications of recovery were visible; and that recovery came too late, and up to the present time has been too slight to produce any marked effect on the revenue.

RESULTS OF THE PAST YEAR.

The results of the past year are already in the hands of hon. Members. After allowing for the changes introduced into the Budget during its passage through this House, I estimated the revenue at £143,390,000, and it has actually realised £143,370,000, a difference of only £20,000 on these high figures. So near an approximation between the actual result and the estimate framed twelve months before is indeed remarkable. But I confess that I should feel more satisfied if that close correspondence in the aggregates had not been accompanied by an equally remarkable divergence in many of the details of which the result is composed. Customs fell short of my estimate by £500,000. Sugar, in spite of the shortage of supply and the high prices prevailing during the latter part of the year realised £180,000 more than I had expected. Had it not been for the failure of the Continental beet crop it would very largely have exceeded my anticipations, and though under present circumstances it is necessary to make a cautious estimate of the yield from this source of revenue in the current year, it promises to be an expanding revenue in future years, when good harvests shall have restored prices to their normal level. Tea fell short of my estimate by £210,000. The greater portion of this deficiency occurred in the last quarter of the year, and may perhaps be attributable mainly to the holding back of dutiable goods on the chance that some relief might now be available. Tobacco has again done well. It has produced nearly £600,000 more than in the preceding year, and a quarter of a million more than my estimate. That, I think, is a not unsatisfactory result for a trade which I was told I had reduced to stagnation. The coffee group shows a slight falling off, and dried fruits give a slight increase. Coal has produced £50,000 more than the estimate, realising £2,050,000. The past year has been a record one in the exportation of coal, whether we regard the export as a whole or confine our attention to that portion of coal which is subject to the tax; and that in spite of the fact that the lower prices prevailing have brought a larger portion of the export within the limits of exemption and have excluded it from the purview of the tax.

THE DECREASE IN WINE AND ITS CAUSES.

Wine has done badly. As I said last year, the wine duties have for many years been a falling source of revenue. Instead of the small increase of £14,000, for which I estimated, the revenue from wine shows a further decline of £146,000.

This may in part be due to a change in taste; it is undoubtedly in part owing to lessened purchasing power among the consuming classes. But it is also suggested to me by those in the trade that it is in part due to the growing competition, largely, as they allege, a fraudulent competition, of wines made in this country. It is asserted that there is a very considerable amount of wine manufactured in this country, partly from imported grape must, more largely from currants and raisins, and that this wine, known to the trade as "basis" wine, is sold to the British consumer partly as it stands, but more commonly in mixture with imported wine, under the names of genuine imported wines. By my instructions the Inland Revenue have made careful inquiry into this matter, and have received material assistance from most of those concerned in the matter one way or the other. I am bound to say that I think the allegations made are very much exaggerated, though probably a considerable amount of fraud is practised upon the British consumer and on foreign and colonial wine producers by the sale of these spurious wines under names to which they have no right. But the information at our disposal is at the present time too meagre to allow of any large measures of reform or large changes in our system being proposed to the Committee, though I think it would be desirable that we should bring the manufacturers of this British wine under revenue observation and control by imposing upon them an obligation to take out a licence at a small fee. similar to that which is exacted from the makers of British vinegar for the protection of the revenue. That, however, is a matter with which I do not propose to deal in the present Budget; it must remain for consideration by the Committee and the House on another occasion.

So far the gains and losses on the Customs revenue pretty nearly equalised one another, though there is a slight balance in favour of the gains.

THE FALL IN FOREIGN SPIRITS.

But the most serious fall in this portion of our revenue has been in that which is derived from the importation of foreign spirits, which show a deficiency of no less than £618,000. In 1903–4 the net receipts from imported spirits were £4,458,000, and I estimated for a revenue from the same source in 1904–5 of £4,450,000; the actual yield has been only £3,840,000, and of that deficiency no less than five-sixths occurred in the single article of foreign plain spirits. This was due to the same causes which have affected the price of sugar in the past few months—that is, the climatic conditions, which caused the failure of the potato and the beet crops. In 1904 the crop of potatoes in Germany was 198,000,000 cwt. less than in 1903, and as much as 312,000,000 cwt. less than in the plentiful year 1901. In 1902, when the surplus potatoes of 1901 had no doubt been turned into spirits, the import value here of German plain spirits was only 6s. 9d. per proof gallon. In 1904, when the German potato crop was the shortest of recent years, the price had risen to 14s. 3d. The demand for spirit in Germany absorbed the major portion of the production, and at the prices prevailing that country was apparently unable to compete with home-made spirits. I now pass from Customs to Excise.

EXCISE.

Excise, I am sorry to say, also failed to realise my expectations. Beer was expected to produce £13,100,000; it has reached a total of £12,680,000. Spirits, from which I anticipated a revenue of £17,700,000, have produced only £17,360,000, in spite of the marked decline in the importation of foreign spirits to which I have just alluded, which should naturally have produced a corresponding rise in the production of British spirits. Taking once again Customs and Excise together, the combined revenue from beer and spirits has fallen by no less than £1,370,000 below the estimate, an estimate, I may add, which took no credit for the increase of consumption which might normally be expected to follow from the growth of population, but was itself actually below the net receipts of the preceding year.

THE DECLINE IN SPIRITS AND BEER CONSUMPTION.

This continued decline in the growth of revenue from alcohol in its various forms will give rise to various reflections, according as to whether for the moment we are most concerned with the moral and social condition of the country or with the balance-sheet of the national accounts. Last year, in attempting to account for an even greater decline, I attributed some part of it to the character of the seasons, and some part of it to diminished spending power among the masses of the people. No doubt within the last twelve months their spending power has not increased; but from further experience I think we must look to more permanent causes for the full explanation of the remarkable decline that has taken place in recent years in the consumption of alcohol. It is of course impossible to discriminate positively and precisely between the relative importance of the diminished power of purchasing, and the diminished desire to consume in producing this result; but there are some signs which I think make it necessary that we should attribute to the latter factor no small share in the decline. It used to be considered that a good harvest was worth a considerable sum to the beer revenue; yet a good summer and plentiful crops last year produced no appreciable effect on the collection; and it is at least significant that the great revival of trade in the last six months in Lancashire, though not counterbalanced by increased depression elsewhere, has done nothing to check the decline. Taking calendar years for the purposes of comparison, because they are less liable than financial years to disturbance by changes or anticipated changes in the rate of duty, I find that the consumption per head both of spirits and of beer was less in 1904 than in any one of the last fifteen years, and that since 1900 the decline has been continuous. The consumption of spirits per head of the population in 1900 was 1·09 gallons, and by 1904 it had sunk to ·95 of a gallon. The consumption of beer, which in 1900 was 31½ gallons per head of the population, had decreased last year to 29 gallons.

A CHANGE IN THE HABITS OF THE PEOPLE.

The fact seems to be that we are witnessing a change in the habits of the people of which we shall have to take account in any consideration of our financial system. I do not refer merely to the growth of a public opinion throughout all classes of the community which condemns drunkenness as disgraceful and disgusting. The prosperity of the trade and the revenue derived from it never have depended, and never will depend, upon the drunkard. But I think that the mass of our people are beginning to find other ways of expending some portion of the time and money which used previously to be spent in the public-house. No change has been more remarkable in the habits of the people than the growing attendances in the last fifteen years at outdoor games and sports and at places of public entertainment, like the theatres and the music-halls, which, though not conducted on strictly temperance lines, yet do not lend themselves to the consumption of drink, or offer that as their chief attraction. Again, the extension of cheap railway fares and the enormous growth of cheap excursions, which are so marked a feature in the holidays of the present time, absorb a further portion of the money that used formerly to be expended on drink. I am inclined to believe that the progress of temperance owes more to the operation of these causes than to any measures, however desirable in themselves, which this House has seen fit to take. I think it will interest the Committee to hear some extracts from a report on this subject which I have received from an Inland Revenue supervisor of experience stationed at Leeds. He says—

> "There are seventy-one brewers in this district, and at least sixty of these are publicans or beer retailers. It is the general opinion that a wave of sobriety is passing over the country, and the working and middle classes, instead of spending their holidays in the public-house, take advantage of the cheap excursion trains and cheap tramway fares, while in the evening they visit the music-halls or other places of amusement. Many publicans attribute their falling receipts entirely to the latter cause, and to the extension of the custom of giving two nightly performances. To verify certain statements, I visited several public-houses on the August Bank Holiday, and I found them practically empty. I visited the railway station and found that every excursion train was packed, and that the departing trains with their heavy loads appeared to have no visible effect on the crowds on the platform, owing to the steady influx of holiday makers. There was no indication of the want of money so long as it was required for pleasure or amusement."

He goes on to say that on the August Bank Holiday one of the largest publicans in the district went holiday-making to a seaside resort, and called upon a friend in the same trade. They went for a walk on the promenade, and the visitor, struck by the enormous crowds, suggested to his friend that trade must be very brisk. The local publican denied it, and, pointing to the people on the beach and their packets of provisions, said: "Look at them! they bring their nosebags with them. They spend nothing here except for admission to the pier or tower; all their money has gone in railway fares." The supervisor from whom I am quoting states that similar reports reach him from other places, and adds—

> "I am convinced that the revenue from beer and spirits has reached the high-water mark and is falling, and will continue to do so. Any increase of wages in the future will be expended in pleasure and amusement, and not on drink."

That conclusion is expressed in terms more absolute than I should be inclined to adopt. I do not doubt that with reviving prosperity our revenue from this source may regain some measure of its old elasticity; but I do not think that we can count upon it in future to bear so large a proportion of our expenditure as it has borne in the past. That is a factor with which we shall have to count. It is a change which may bring unmixed satisfaction to nearly every Member of the House except the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it leaves a gap in our financial system which we shall have to find other means of filling.

THE INDIRECT TAXPAYER.

It is one of the objects of any system of national taxation that every member of the community should contribute his fair share of the expenditure of a Government, which in the last resort is controlled and directed by the popular will. But it is obvious that such a change as I have described without any change in taxation, may upset the financial equilibrium, and by altering the proportionate burdens of different classes or individuals may render inequitable and unjust a system of taxation which in other times and with other tastes was both fair and reasonable. I remember that when my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol imposed the duty on sugar an hon. Member confided to me that for the first time he had become an indirect taxpayer. He neither drank alcohol, nor did he smoke; coffee he never touched, and tea disagreed with him. An occasional cup of cocoa may perhaps have contributed some small toll to the revenue; but for the rest he went scot free. I do not doubt that the hon. Member was grateful to my right hon. friend for the opportunity which he afforded him of contributing more nearly his fair share to our national revenue; but it is clear that if the principles or the tastes of that hon. Member were to prevail among large sections of the people, our present distribution of taxation would become increasingly unfair, and others besides my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol might be obliged to call new taxes into existence to redress the balance of the old. For the present, however, I only desire to call the attention of the Committee to a tendency which appears to me to be of importance in any review of our national finances, and which has left its mark on the results of the preceding year.

RELATIVE PROPORTIONS OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXATION.

In my Budget Estimate I anticipated that, excluding the tax on coal 51·8 per cent. of our tax revenue would be derived from indirect taxes. Owing to the circumstances I have mentioned, they have contributed only 50·9 per cent.

Customs and Excise having disappointed my expectations, it is to direct taxation that I owe the near approximation of the actual receipts to my Budget Estimate. Death duties, it is true, produced only £12,350,000, or £650,000 less than I had anticipated. The result must be ascribed in the main to the fact that we were less than usually fortunate—I hope the Committee will pardon me that expression—in the earlier portion of the year, in the matter of large estates. Stamps began badly, but they more than made good the deficit of the earlier months in the latter portion of the year. They produced £150,000 more than our Estimate, or £7,700,000. Land tax and house duty show an excess of £100,000.

INCOME-TAX.

But the great gain in direct taxation is due to the income-tax, which exceeded my Estimate by £1,250,000, yielding £31,250,000 in the course of the year. So much attention has been called to the increased yield of the income-tax and so much misconception appears to be abroad in regard to the matter that I hope I shall have an early opportunity of going fully into the question. For the present I think I shall best consult the wishes and the not unnatural impatience of the Committee if I pass briefly over the subject. I have to admit at once two errors in the estimate which I made. In the first place I undoubtedly overrated the decline which was to be expected from the inclusion in the averages, by which a large portion of the tax is collected, of what was on the whole a bad year in place of what had been a very good one; and, in the second place, I made no allowance at all for the increased efficiency of collection which has been going on for some years, but which was undoubtedly largely stimulated by the new instructions issued by the Board of Inland Revenue to the collectors in the month of September last. As I say, I do not doubt that I shall have an opportunity of giving the House full information on the subject, and of making the explanation which I wish to do, before very long. For the present I confine myself to the statement that those instructions were issued by the Board of Inland Revenue in the exercise of their ordinary discretion, without any regard to the circumstances of this particular year, and without any hint or suggestion from me. I am, of course, absolutely responsible for them I take the whole responsibility. But I think, having regard to what has been said and suggested outside, that the Committee ought to know that these instructions were not the result of the pressure of a needy Chancellor of the Exchequer, but were the ordinary action of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in pursuit of a policy which they had long been following. I estimate that owing to the steps which were taken the receipt for the past year has been increased by £800,000, and the arrears left over for collection in the present year have been correspondingly diminished. I may add, and I think it will interest the Committee to know it, that since 1901 there has been a steady diminution in the amount of arrears per penny of tax left over for collection in the next financial year. Thus, in 1901, they were £567,000 per penny of tax; in 1902 they fell by £28,000 to £539,000; in 1903 they fell by no less than £89,000 to £450,000; in 1904 they fell by £34,000 to £416,000; while this year I estimate, on the best calculation that I can make at the present, time that they have further fallen by £66,000, and will stand for the current year at £350,000 per penny of tax. The Committee will therefore see that this has been a movement of steady progress for some years past and that it is no sudden or new departure, but the natural development and consequence of a policy which we have for some time been pursuing. That concludes my review of the revenue of the past year, I am afraid an unusually long one, but there were some features in it which I thought might be of exceptional interest to the Committee.

EXPENDITURE OF 1904–5.

I will now turn to the other side of the account. I budgeted for an expenditure of £142,880,000, including the amount estimated to be required for the military operations in Somaliland. The actual issues, inclusive of further small Supplementary Estimates voted in the present session, have amounted, however, only to £141,956,000, or £924,000 less than my estimate. To complete the comparison of the previous years, and to give the House a statement of the aggregate expenditure of the State, we must add to those figures the amount collected and applied in relief of local rates—namely £9,813,000—and in expenditure on capital account for works authorised by Parliament, which we financed during the course of the year to the extent of £8,069,000. The interest and Sinking Fund for these loans is, as the Committee knows, separately provided for in the Votes of the different Departments on whose account the loans are made. Adding these amounts to the total which I have already given, we arrive at a sum of £159,838,000 as the aggregate expenditure of the State during the year on revenue and capital accounts combined.

THE REALISED SURPLUS.

Returning now to the Exchequer account, we find that the result is that, with a revenue of £143,370,000 and an expenditure chargeable against it of £141,956,000, we close the year with a surplus of £1,414,000, compared with a Budget Estimate of £510,000. This realised surplus of nearly a £1,500,000 becomes Old Sinking Fund, and will be applied under the provisions of the Sinking Fund Act, 1875, in accordance with the statement I made last year to the Committee, to strengthen our balances. We shall thus almost exactly make good the draft made upon them by the deficit of the previous year. I am glad to say that our balances are now in a much better position than they were a year ago. We started the year with a nominal balance of £4,264,000, but of this £2,000,000, or nearly one-half, represented a temporary loan from the Bank which has since been repaid, so that the real balance on March 31st last was £2,264,000. But in 1903–4 we had advanced on capital account £2,000,000 more than the National Debt Commissioners could at that time provide, and this sum has since been repaid. We have also exercised the powers of borrowing on Exchequer Bonds conferred on us by the Capital Expenditure Act of last year to the extent of £6,000,000, and of the amount so realised we have still in hand £843,000. The realised surplus of the past year gave us, as I have explained, £1,414,000, and in accordance with the provisions of the Finance Act of last year we obtained a further sum of £1,000,000 by the realisation of Consols standing to the credit of the Unclaimed Dividend Account. From the total of £7,521,000 which we have thus obtained we have to deduct the discount of £86,000 paid on the renewal of various Exchequer Bonds, and a sum of £5,000, by which our temporary advances exceeded our repayments, making altogether £91,000, and leaving us a balance of £7,430,000 with which to commence the present year. It may perhaps interest the Committee to know that the India Council took up £1,200,000 of Treasury bills, which had to be renewed in the course of the year.

THE DEBT.

I turn now to the Debt. And once again I must distinguish, as we have done in previous years, between what we are accustomed to describe as the dead-weight debt and the debt incurred for the purposes of public defence or improvement, such as naval and military works and public buildings and the like. Sir, the distinction is doubly sound, because, in the first place, the latter debt has, as the Committee are aware, its own provision for Sinking Fund and interest which is charged upon the Votes of the Department which has expended the money, and it stands wholly outside the dead-weight debt for the service of which the Fixed Debt Charge is provided. In the second place, we hold against that debt assets in the shape of the works constructed by means of that expenditure, which will outlast the currency of the debt itself. During the year this portion of the debt has been very largely increased. At the beginning of the year it stood at £31,868,000; by the close of the year it had reached a total of £41,664,000, an increase of £9,796,000. It is perhaps scarcely necessary for me to remind the Committee that the whole of the undertakings on which that money is expended had received the approval of the House in previous sessions, and that no increase of our liabilities was incurred during the past year. I have more than once expressed my own view to the Committee that, however necessary it was to have recourse to this method to make good the arrears of past years or to meet circumstances of an exceptional and extraordinary kind, it ought not to form part of our permanent financial system. We have, of course, still to complete the works which Parliament has already sanctioned and to take whatever steps are necessary in order to fulfil the obligations which Parliament has already incurred; but I hope that it will not be necessary to extend the programme which has already been approved. I hold that this procedure should be reserved for exceptional occasions. The dead-weight debt on March 31st, 1904, stood at £762,630,000. In the course of the twelve months the funded debt has been reduced by £1,950,000, the estimated liability on terminable annuities by £3,608,000, and the unfunded debt by the amount of the £2,000,000 which we borrowed temporarily from the Bank the year before in order to strengthen our balance. The total reduction of the dead-weight debt in the course of the twelve months has therefore been £7,558,000. At the close of the year this debt stood at £755,072,000. With that statement I finish my review of the past year and I turn to the prospects of the present year.

PROSPECTS OF THE PRESENT YEAR.

The current year's services charged on the Consolidated Fund amounted to £29,780,000. Supply services, for which Estimates have already been laid before Parliament, amount to £111,252,000, making altogether a total estimated expenditure on that account of £141,032,000. To arrive at the total expenditure of the year we have to add the money which will be collected and applied to local purposes, amounting to £9,756,000, and the amount required for expenditure on works charged to capital, which I provisionally estimate at £9,000,000. I shall be prepared at a later date to give the Committee full details as to the estimates of this expenditure, but I have not at the present time means at my disposal to do more than give them the total in round numbers. The total sum, therefore, for which the State has to provide in the current year is £159,788,000, of which £141,032,000 is chargeable against the revenue for the year. To meet this expenditure I estimate that the following revenue will be available on the present basis of taxation. Customs I put at £35,600,000—that is to say, £630,000 less than the estimate, and £130,000 less than the receipts of the past year. I have to allow for a further fall of rather over £400,000 in the produce of the sugar duty, but against this I can set certain gains on other items of revenue. Excise I put at £30,200,000, or £1,300,000 below the estimate of last year; that allows for a further fall of £550,000 in the receipts from this source of revenue. I now come to the death duties. In the closing portion of the year there was some improvement in their yield, and I think we may anticipate a further recovery in the present year. I therefore place my estimate at £13,000,000, which is the amount actually realised in the year 1903–4. Stamps did better than my estimate last year, and I think we may expect a further improvement in the current year. I place them, therefore, at £8,000,000. Land tax and House duty I put at £2,700,000; Property and Income-tax at £31,000,000. That is £250,000 less than the yield for the past year, because, although the arrears will be collected at a higher figure, there will be fewer arrears to collect. That gives me a total tax revenue of £120,500,000. From the Post Office I anticipate an increase of £400,000, making the receipts £16,500,000. From the Telegraphs I expect an increase of £220,000, or a total revenue of £4,050,000. From Crown Lands I expect to get £470,000, and from Miscellaneous Revenue £1,450,000. I am reminded that I have not mentioned in my calculations of non-tax revenue the produce of the Suez Canal shares—a grave omission, and one which I should regret the more if it did not serve to emphasise the admirable results we have achieved by that historic investment. The Suez Canal shares will, I anticipate, yield a revenue of £1,034,000. The total non-tax revenue will be, therefore, £23,504,000, which, added to a tax revenue of £120,500,000 gives a total revenue of £144,004,000, against an estimated expenditure of £141,032,000, leaving us a surplus on the present basis of taxation of £2,972,000.

CONDITION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

When I appeared at this Table a year ago with a heavy realised deficit, and another deficit in prospect, the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer appeared to me to be hardly enviable. Now that I appear twelve months later with a modest surplus already realised, and a further surplus possible, fresh fears beset my mind. I am not certain that a Chancellor of the Exchequer with empty pockets is not a safer and more light-hearted man than one with a small surplus at his command. There are so many candidates for relief, and the fragments at my disposal will not suffice to feed the multitude! But I have no doubt whatever what is the first claim upon us under present circumstances, and I hope this Committee, without distinction of Party, will support the Government in the course they have decided to recommend. I spoke just now of the amount of our National Debt. It stood on March 31st last at £796,736,000, or taking the dead-weight debt alone, at £755,072,000. It was largely increased during the late war, when not only was the major portion of the Sinking Fund suspended for three years, but heavy new loans were incurred. That was not only a justifiable but a necessary course; but if it is right and just to borrow largely in the emergency of a great war, when the honour and even the existence of the Empire are at stake, it is upon the condition that when peace is re-established we take the first opportunity in our power to restore our national credit and to lighten the burden of debt which we hand on to our successors. And if that statement be true of all times and all circumstances, there are special reasons for taking such a course to-day. It is not only that the total of our debt is large, but the unfunded debt stands at the exceptionally high figure of £77,633,000. I use the term unfunded debt to describe all debt the discharge of which on a fixed date was part of the bargain with the lender, and for the redemption of which within its currency no specific provision has been made by Parliament. It includes Treasury bills, amounting in round figures to £21,000,000, War Stock amounting to £30,000,000, and Exchequer Bonds amounting to £26,500,000. Of this amount the whole of War Stock and £12,500,000 of the Exchequer Bonds do not fall due until 1907–8 or later years, but £14,000,000 of the Exchequer Bonds expire in December of this year. In view of that contingency, I think it is necessary that we should not be content with the simple renewal of these Bonds, for which we already have Parliamentary authority, but that we should take such steps as will secure their redemption by a regular process and within a reasonable time.

The proposal which I am about to submit to the Committee has these objects in view. By the Sinking Fund already at our disposal, and by means of the repayments lately received from the Transvaal on account of works executed upon their railways and stores handed over to them at the close of the war, I hope to be able to extinguish four out of these fourteen millions. There will then remain ten millions of Bonds to be dealt with in December next; and in order to enable me to pay them off, I propose that new Bonds of an equivalent amount should be issued with a currency of ten years, but—and this is the important consideration to which I desire to direct the special attention of the Committee—that one-tenth of the total issue should be drawn and repaid each year. And in order that the Sinking Fund which I attach to these new bonds shall not trench upon the Sinking Fund we have at present available for the redemption of the debt, I propose that the Fixed Debt Charge shall be increased by £1,000,000 a year, so that it shall stand at £28,000,000 instead of £27,000,000. By this means we shall have redeemed this portion of the debt within a comparatively few years, and without any of the disturbance which accompanies a sudden operation upon a large scale, whilst, by attaching to the new Bonds a Sinking Fund of the amount and character I have described, we shall render them more attractive to investors, and be able to issue them upon better terms than would otherwise be obtainable.

A LIMITED FUNDING OPERATION.

I am aware that there is a certain novelty about this procedure, because the Sinking Fund which I propose to attach to the new Bonds will form part of the bargain with the public creditor and cannot therefore be suspended under any circumstances. But even during the late war more than a million of the then existing Sinking Fund was subject to the same condition; and I think the course proposed is justifiable when the security to which the Sinking Fund is attached is of comparatively short duration, and when the amount of Sinking Fund remaining available as a war reserve is itself sufficiently large. And though it has not been customary for the State to attach specific Sinking Funds to securities for which it is itself directly liable, we have several precedents for such a course as I propose in connection with guaranteed loans, such, for instance, as the Turkish

Loan of 1855, the Egyptian Loan of 1885, and the Greek Loan of 1898. The proposal which I make is in fact a limited funding operation, and I so limit it for more reasons than one. Even if I were convinced that it would be necessary to have recourse to further funding, I do not think anyone will contend that the present moment is a propitious time to choose for a large issue of Consols or that it is in itself desirable, if such a result can be avoided, to create a new denomination of stock: whilst either of those alternatives, unless accompanied by such an increase in the Fixed Debt Charge as I have suggested, would tend to defer to the future obligations for which I believe that it is our present duty to provide. In any case the proposal which I have made meets the contingency for which early provision is necessary. Next year the new Sinking Fund will be increased by the falling in of some of the terminable annuities, and a larger sum will therefore be available for use, if it is so desired, in redeeming further Unfunded Debt in the hands of the public, while before long I hope we shall have also available for the same purpose the first instalment of the Transvaal War Contribution. That contribution was promised by the most representative gathering of the British inhabitants of the Transvaal which could be summoned at the time when the promise was given. Its fulfilment has been delayed by the industrial and financial depression which has since fallen upon that country; and although with the new labour conditions that depression is now passing away, we have not thought it right to impose upon the Transvaal, by the exercise of our authority in a now moribund nominated Council, an obligation which we believe the new Representative Assembly will voluntarily assume as the fulfilment of an obligation of honour and the recognition of a high Imperial duty. I do not believe that anything in the proposals which I am making, or in the increased sacrifices to pay off debt which I am asking from the public, will do anything to weaken—on the contrary, I believe they will help to strengthen—the determination of our fellow-citizens in the Transvaal to discharge as early as may be their share in the arrangement which was come to between us. In any case, I commend these proposals with confidence to the judgment of the Committee. The two things most calculated to restore our national credit to its former high level and to ease our financial position are an increase in the Sinking Fund and a diminution in the Unfunded Debt. Both are included in the plan I have submitted. I propose to issue these new bonds at once. The Committee are aware that, owing to the excess of expenditure over revenue in the earlier portion of the year, we have of late years been obliged to avail ourselves largely of the power of borrowing temporarily on Treasury Bills conferred upon us by the various Consolidated Fund Acts. If the House approves my proposal to make the new issue at an early date, I shall have the use of the money so raised in the earlier portion of the financial year, and shall be able to restrict my temporary borrowings on Treasury Bills to a proportionate extent. I hope that in other respects also we shall make fewer demands on the money market this year. In 1904 we had to raise £6,000,000 of Local Loans stock, £5,000,000 of Irish Land stock, and £6,000,000 of Exchequer Bonds for financing capital expenditure, so that, apart from temporary borrowings on Ways and Means, we took from the market no less than £17,000,000 of new money between the months of January and December. In the present calendar year I hope that it will not be necessary to make any fresh issue of Local Loans stock or to go into the market for requirements connected with our capital expenditure. If these expectations are realised, as I believe they will be, our only application to the market from January to December of the present year will be for the issue of the £6,000,000 of Irish Land stock already made, and for such temporary borrowings on Ways and Means as may still be necessary after taking credit for the issue of the new Exchequer Bonds in anticipation of the date on which the old Bonds expire. This proposal disposes of £1,000,000 out of my surplus.

MINOR PROPOSALS.

I think at this point I must very briefly refer to two Committees which have been sitting to inquire into matters connected with our revenue. The first is the Income-tax Committee presided over by my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon. That Committee has not yet presented its Report, although I think it has very nearly completed its labours; but, of course, the results will arrive too late for me to apply them to the finances of the present year. The other Committee, the appointment of which arose out of our Finance Bill discussions of last year, was asked to inquire into the facilities that now exist for the use of alcohol for industrial purposes, and to recommend any changes which they might think necessary with a view to facilitating the development of our trade. Their Report reached me a few days ago, and will be in the hands of Members within a very short time. It proposes certain changes in our regulations, some of them of a rather technical character, which I think the Committee will better appreciate from a perusal of the Report itself than from any statement I could make. I only desire to say that, on the consideration which I have up to the present time been able to give, I hope to be able to adopt the whole of these recommendations, though they will require legislation and must form the subject of a separate measure. They will, I believe, remove difficulties which have existed in the use of alcohol in certain trades, and I hope they will be accepted as a satisfactory solution of a very difficult and complicated problem by all concerned. I must also very briefly announce one or two minor changes which I propose to introduce. The Committee may remember that in the course of the discussion of the Finance Bill of last year I accepted an Amendment reducing the Warehousing Charges payable on the clearance of certain dutiable goods from the Customs to one half the figure at which it previously stood. Those charge were graduated according to the amount of the duty, and when I raised the duty I had no desire to raise the charges at the same time. The Warehousing Charges now stand at $\frac{1}{16}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent., according to the nature of the goods. They only bring in £26,000 to the revenue and cause an amount of trouble and annoyance, and, I believe, often of cost to the traders out of all proportion to their value to the Exchequer. I propose to clear away the remainder of the Warehousing Charges. For the same reason I propose to abolish the stamp on bonds given for the exportation or removal of dutiable goods and on notices to export given under a general bond, and also the penny stamp on delivery orders. It is difficult to defend the retention of these stamp duties when once attention is drawn to them. The former is unequal in its incidence, for whilst bonds and notices relating to tea and tobacco are liable, similar bonds and notices relating to coal and spirits are exempt. The stamp on delivery orders is not less difficult to justify. It is very easy of evasion, and I think the obligation to pay it is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. When I made some inquiry, after a recent deputation, why this matter had not been again pressed upon my attention by the members who waited upon me, I learned that it was because so little was paid on that account already that they thought it better not to direct my attention to it. These two stamp duties together produce only £10,000 or £12,000 to the revenue, and are even less worth retaining from the Exchequer point of view than the Warehousing Charge. I believe that the relief accorded by these changes will be appreciated by traders. They will strike some fetters off trade which have existed for many years, in spite of the little justification there is for them. The relief will cost practically nothing to the Exchequer, and does not affect the figures which I have already given to the Committee, for I have taken account of it in the Estimates that I have already presented.

THE TEA DUTY.

I have still, therefore, £1,972,000 available to meet contingencies or for the reduction of taxation. I greatly regret that it is not in my power to propose any relief to the income-tax payers. I said last year, and I hold now, that an income-tax of 1s. in the £ in time of peace is more than ought to be demanded of them, and leaves us too small a reserve in case of the emergency of war. I shall not be satisfied with our financial position until we have been able to reduce the tax to a more moderate figure. But the amount at my disposition, after adding to the Sinking Fund, is unequal to the task of giving them any relief. The reduction of the income-tax by 1d. would cost £2,200,000 in the current year, and, as the Committee know, the sum at my disposal is less than £2,000,000.

Setting aside this course, therefore, as beyond my power, I choose tea as the subject for relief; and I choose it for three reasons. In the first place, Sir, the tea duty is the only tax which stands to-day at a higher figure than it ever attained during the period of the late war; and it, therefore, has a prior claim to relief over other indirect taxes, which, if they were raised during the war, have not been again raised since the war. In the second place, I choose tea because it is an article of almost universal consumption, and the relief, therefore, will find its way to every household in the kingdom. And I choose tea, in the third place, because our present supplies of this article come almost entirely from British Colonies and dependencies, and it was with avowed reluctance that last year I chose such an article to be the subject of an increase in taxation. I propose, therefore, to devote the remainder of my surplus to removing, as from July 1st next, the date on which the present duty expires, the additional 2d. on tea which was imposed last year. I shall be prepared to defend the date which I to have chosen if it is challenged. It is sufficient to say at present that the money available is not sufficient to reduce the duty as from the present time. I estimate that the cost of that concession will be £1,550,000 in the current year.

THE FINAL BALANCE SHEET.

I am now in a position to present my final balance-sheet to the House. Customs, after allowing for the reduction in the tea duty, will stand at £34,050,000, thus reducing the total estimated revenue to £142,454,000. The Fixed Debt Charge, being increased by £1,000,000, will stand at £28,000,000, and the expenditure will be correspondingly increased to £142,032,000, leaving a balance of £422,000 available to meet contingencies. That concludes my task. I have now only to thank the Committee for the attention which they have accorded to me. It has been my fortune to be Chancellor of the Exchequer in two years of trade depression and financial stagnation. Last year it was my duty to impose an increase in our burdens. This year the small measure of relief which it is in our power to afford falls, I am afraid, far short of the expectations which have been formed in many quarters. Such times as these do not lend themselves to the production of what are known as popular Budgets. But in the proposals which I have laid before the Committee on behalf of His Majesty's Government we have sought not our own present popularity, but the permanent interests of the country. And by adopting these proposals the Committee will do all that lies in their power to stimulate the movement of recovery which is now visible, to enhance our national credit, and to strengthen the confidence rightly felt in the soundness and stability of our national finance.

EXCHEQUER BONDS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding £10,000,000 be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000."

"That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest of any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I only desire to interpolate a few remarks at this stage, the first and almost principal of which is to express our congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman, not only upon the clearness and ability of his statement, but also upon its duration, because there is an impression in this quarter of the House that it is perhaps the shortest Budget speech that we have listened to for many years. That is the greatest praise that I can possibly offer. I wish to refer to an arrangement which I urged upon the Government last year in regard to the discussion of the Budget Resolutions—namely, that, apart from the general discussion that may take place to-night, there should be an opportunity on one or other of the other Resolutions for a general discussion to-morrow or on Wednesday. I think that last year it was arranged that a certain Resolution should be used for the purposes of a general discussion, and I trust that the same course will be followed on this occasion.

I pass now to the substance of the Budget; and again I have to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman. I congratulate him especially with regard to the Debt, which shows that he maintains this year the fortitude which he displayed in the same matter last year under even greater temptations than those that beset him now. I would also say that it will not be in this quarter of the House, where we have year by year supported Motions for the reduction of the tea duty, that any objection will be made to that proposal. Of course we cannot help but notice that there still remains a large amount of war taxation pressing hardly upon the people because of the expenditure on what we think the extravagant Estimates which the Government have put forward, which gives the right hon. Gentleman no margin with which to relieve these burdens. For instance, after all the consideration that has been given to the Army Estimates, after all the promises that have been made regarding them, if there had been upon them a reduction to something like the extent as on the Navy Estimates, the right hon. Gentleman could have given some further boon to the much-pressed taxpayers of the country in addition to the removal of the tea duty that he imposed last year, since the war was over.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): It is quite in accordance with precedent that the right hon. Gentleman has refrained from making any criticism on the admirable statement which my right hon. friend has made. The chief purpose of his remarks was to inquire whether any arrangement could be come to between the two sides of the House with regard to the discussion of our financial arrangements. My right hon. friend, for reasons that he is quite willing to explain, thinks it is absolutely necessary to obtain the first Resolution in the course of this evening. On the other hand, we are of course sensible of the fact that the House has a right to discuss the Budget in its larger aspects at this stage. That can be done by arrangement on any Resolution. [An Hon. Member: The income-tax.] But I hope an arrangement will be made that will enable us to finish the proceedings on this stage on Wednesday night. Otherwise, it will be difficult to so arrange the business of the House that we may rise on Wednesday week for the holidays.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that, although it was impossible to give a full and measured criticism of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals, the discussion immediately following the Budget statement was always extremely valuable, in that it gave Members an opportunity of expressing their views upon the general financial policy of the Government. He was glad to be in agreement with and to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the main portion of the Budget; he thought the right hon. Gentleman had made an excellent use of the small amount at his disposal, and the popularity with which the announcement was received would have shown the right hon. Gentleman that he was wise in leaving the burden on the income-tax payers untouched for the present, and in considering the greater sorrows of the classes he proposed to relieve. If he might make one remark about tea, it would be that all the reasons which the right hon. Gentleman had adduced to-day for removing the burden were in existence last year, and one could not but regret the exigency which compelled the Chancellor of the Exchequer then to impose so heavy a burden which he felt bound to remove a year afterwards. Some difficulty might arise, however, in consequence of the reduction not coming into operation until July 1st. That, he believed, was not in accordance with precedent, and the right hon. Gentleman would possibly find that the loss both to the Exchequer and to the trade would be less if the reduction came into force immediately. For clearances to be postponed and old stocks of tea in the 60,000 grocers' shops in the land to be used down to the last instead of there being free withdrawals from the Customs House would not be any better for the revenue than for the trade. But if there were indications of such a stagnation of business arising, the fact would doubtless be brought to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, who might then, at a later period, reconsider the point.

He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the great attention he had given to the intricate and difficult matters connected with the stamp duty and warehouse charge, which for years past had pressed quite unfairly on the tea and other trades. The historic Chancellor of the Exchequer was always so busily engaged in dealing with millions of money that he had been unable to have any regard for the difficulties put in the way of some trades by the incidence of tax collection. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, seemed to have grasped those difficulties, and his announcement with regard to the warehouse charge, the stamp or delivery orders, and the stamp on goods removed under bond would be greatly appreciated by the trade. From his interesting statement regarding the decrease in the wine, beer, and spirit duties, the right hon. Gentleman had omitted one very obvious cause, which, regarding the matter from the financial standpoint, ought not to be forgotten. The reason this particular branch of revenue was not so elastic as in previous years was that the taxation had been raised to a point not hitherto reached. The taxation was too high, and it was in consequence not producing so well. For instance, the duty on light wines was suddenly raised 25 per cent. and then another niggling change was made. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had really no business to preach little sermons on the way people enjoyed themselves at holiday times, when all experience should convince him that the undue raising of a tax inevitably diminished its yield, and that a better revenue was likely to be realised from a tax moderately fixed. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would look into this point and seriously consider whether lower rates of duty might not, on the whole, be more productive.

He was amused at the attempt of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to throw upon his predecessors the blame for what he called "the deficiency in the collecting of the income-tax." That expression hardly covered the steps the right hon. Gentleman had been taking. An inquest was recently held at Holborn on a man who had committed suicide because he was unable to obtain the money to pay the income-tax. The Committee generally would probably agree that the right hon. Gentleman had taken too stringent measures this year in the matter of income-tax collection. The hon. Member for East Edinburgh was, he believed, the cause of the trouble, he having called attention to the earlier collection in Scotland. It was probably the fact that North of the Tweed the amount paid was so small that it could easily be raised, whereas down South it made considerable difference when the amount had to be paid a month or two earlier. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer saw no prospect of reducing the borrowings this year. It was really blameworthy on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that he should deliver small lectures on the necessity of paying expenditure out of revenue, and, at the same time, fail to take any steps in that direction himself. The proposal to issue immediately £10,000,000 bills to meet the Treasury bills due in December would have to be looked into very closely, as the proper way would seem to be to wait until the bills fell due, and then make the best arrangements possible. On the whole, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made an excellent statement—a good conservative statement, using the word in its best and not its Party sense. The better provision for the reduction of Debt would be a solid contribution towards the improvement of the finances of the country, and the right hon. Gentleman had acted wisely in dealing with his small surplus in the mild and restrained way he had adopted instead of fulfilling the somewhat high hopes which had been entertained in some quarters.

*Sir **ALBERT ROLLIT** (Islington, S.) welcomed the change which had been promised in regard to the removal of the restrictions applying to the use of alcohol for business purposes. Not only had those restrictions given an unfair and a very great preference to foreign countries but they had caused certain forms of industrial employment to be absolutely banished from this country. Nothing could be more acceptable to commerce than that such impediments should be removed, or, at any rate, reduced. The appointment of a Committee to consider the question was in itself an excellent thing. He congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon other important commercial reforms as to minor customs restrictions, etc., which he had announced, and he hoped he would make further advances in a similar direction. They would certainly have been glad if some reduction could have been made in the income-tax and they looked forward with interest to the Report of the Committee which had been appointed to consider the question. He hoped the result would be that some consideration would be shown to precarious incomes as compared with those derived from realised profits. He hoped there would be progress in the direction indicated by Sir Stafford Northcote, that was in the direction of a more equitable graduation of the tax according to the means and abilities of those who had to pay. The Report of this Committee would be looked forward to with great interest. But whatever might be said in favour of a reduction of the income-tax, and he greatly regretted some reduction had not been made, and he thought this might have been done he was sure that an article like tea should receive the removal of that increase which had happily now proved to be merely temporary taxation. He was glad that that step had been taken, and he thought it would form a welcome portion of a most acceptable Budget.

*Mr. **McCRAE** (Edinburgh, E.) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon his excellent speech. It had been most clear and deliberate, and his proposals were so well arranged that no one could have any difficulty in following them. He congratulated him upon his proposals generally, which, he thought, were financially sound and had rather taken the wind out of the sails of the Opposition. He was rather led to believe that this was a dissolution Budget, and the Government were entitled to all the credit they could get out of it.

He wished to analyse the financial position a little more closely, and he should have something to say about the proposal to increase the Sinking Fund and creating bonds for a currency of ten years. If they looked at the statement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them and the revenue for the year which had passed, they would see that it practically balanced the Estimates, although in its details there was a very wide divergence. There had been a serious decline in Customs and Excise, following upon a decline that took place in the year 1903–4. While he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that perhaps a great deal of this was due to the increased sobriety of the people, he thought a good deal of that shortage had been occasioned by depression in trade following the war, and to some extent it was also due to the unsettled condition of trade caused by the fiscal controversy. There had been a large deficiency in revenue from Customs and Excise, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had only been able to balance his revenue by accelerating the collection of the income-tax. He was glad to notice that since the year 1901, according to the speech which had been delivered that day, that accelerated collection had been taking place. He thought, however, that there had been an extra screw put on this year. He did not object to this, because he believed this method of collecting the tax as near as possible within the financial year was a sound one, because it would effect a saving of interest, and future Chancellors of the Exchequer would have to face the full consequences of any alteration. In the past this practice had caused serious dislocation in our finances. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon reduced the income-tax by 4d. in the £ that should have meant a loss of £10,500,000, but on account of the way in which the tax was collected, he only lost the sum of £8,000,000, and the £2,500,000 had to be made good by his successor this year; and so, if this collection was carried on, it would produce an equilibrium in the income-tax imposed and recovered. The deficiency on Customs and Excise amounted to £1,250,000, and that was exactly the increased yield of the income-tax this year over the estimate. He could not help thinking that, whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to blame or not, it appeared that the amount of the shortage to be met in Customs and Excise exactly balanced that which had been raised by the accelerated collection of income-tax.

One interesting feature was that the surplus for the year went to strengthen the balances. The expenditure for the last year had been less by £1,125,000, but he should like to ask whether this was economy in expenditure and a real saving, or only an expedient to postpone necessary expenditure which would have to be met by his successor if the right hon. Gentleman was not in office next year. In the past the present Government had taken no thought for the morrow, and he would like a little more information as to how this economy had been brought about. Coming to the present year they found that the estimated expenditure was £141,032,000. He thought this expenditure was still very excessive. This year they had had an unexpected decrease in naval expenditure, and the declarations of the Secretary of State for War had given them good reason for hoping that there would also have been a considerable decrease in the Army Estimates. Instead of that, however, there had been a slight increase in the Army Estimates. He thought that if the Secretary of State for War would devote more attention to the internal organisation of the War Office and its administration, he would be able to save thousands and perhaps millions of pounds upon the wastage that was going on, and of which they had had ample evidence in regard to the stores scandals. How was this expenditure to be met? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had resisted a very great temptation in not taking a penny off the income-tax. He congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon having refrained from reducing the income-tax this year. It was very important to remember that the charge for Customs and Excise was a very serious one. Customs were estimated to produce £34,050,000, and Excise £30,200,000, making a total for the current year for Customs and Excise of £64,250,000. This was £14,250,000 in excess of the year before the war when it was £50,000,000, so that in the coming year they would have an addition to the direct taxpayer's burdens notwithstanding the relief he was getting upon the tea duty. He thought that was a very serious matter and completely justified the Chancellor of the Exchequer in coming to the relief of the indirect taxpayer.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer deserved their congratulations for his proposal to increase the Sinking Fund by £1,000,000 per annum. On his side of the House they had all along maintained that the Sinking Fund was not at all sufficient, considering the large increase in the Debt occasioned by the war, and the fact that no Sinking Fund had been provided for that war debt. What had been added to the annual charge of the National Debt hardly met the interest, and nothing was set aside for Sinking Fund for its redemption. While congratulating the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what he proposed to do this year, he could not help reminding him that last year even with a deficit of over £5,000,000 on the revenue we had only reduced by our own exertions our indebtedness by £850,000. Of the total reduction of £3,850,000 there came from the Transvaal £3,000,000. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be right in his anticipations that we should have at an early date payment of the first instalment of £10,000,000. In 1903 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, estimated that with what we would receive in respect of that debt, there would be a reduction in the National Debt of £40,000,000—£30,000,000 from the Transvaal Loan, £4,000,000 additional from the Transvaal for money advanced, and £6,000,000 from the Chinese War indemnity. Up to the present time of this £40,000,000 we had only received something like £7,000,000. He was glad to think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer hoped to get the first instalment of £10,000,000, because personally he thought the Transvaal was liable to make good the £30,000,000 which was promised when we guaranteed the loan of £35,000,000.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the necessity for upholding the public credit, and pointed to our indebtedness having had a detrimental effect on that credit. Consols which used to stand at 113 were now a little over ninety. The proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to practically create a fund to wipe off £10,000,000 of the floating debt in ten years was an exceedingly good one, but he could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman did not take advantage of the present opportunity for dealing in a comprehensive way with the National Debt, considering that he could have reduced it by a large amount. There were terminable annuities falling out next year amounting in all to £3,000,000 per annum. It was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his present Budget to have dealt with those annuities, following the example of Mr. Gladstone, who in 1881 proposed to deal with the annuities that were terminating in 1885. Although they were not dealt with in that year, two years later Mr. Childers, his Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought in a National Debt Bill dealing with those annuities which were to fall out two years afterwards. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had at present followed that example what would have been the result? Had he dealt with those falling due by creating new annuities he would have been able to have reduced the Funded Debt by £50,000,000 right off, and established an annuity to wipe off the new debt created in twenty years. There would have been a saving of £1,250,000 interest on the Funded Debt, and the new debt created, principal and interest, would have been wiped out in twenty years. If the right hon. Gentleman did not reduce the Funded Debt by cancelling Consols he should by some process have created a sinking fund which would have wiped off £50,000,000 of the floating debt. That would have been an exceedingly wise operation. What did Mr. Childers do in the Budget speech of 1883? He made these proposals, which were afterwards embodied in the National Debt Act. At that time the amount which by the Act of 1876 was annually applied to the reduction of debt was £28,000,000, exactly the same as that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer now proposed should be applied to that purpose. It did not seem, notwithstanding the large increase in our national wealth, that we had done very much, after all, to reduce our indebtedness. In 1883 effect was given to the proposal made by Mr. Gladstone in 1881, by cancelling Consols amounting to £40,000,000. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer at that time dealt with the Savings Bank account, and by a similar operation £30,000,000 of Consols were cancelled. By that operation alone Mr. Childers in 1883 cancelled £70,000,000 of Consols, with the result that the charge made in respect of these cancellations was now going to lapse next year, and therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a very great opportunity of taking advantage of the termination of these annuities either by cancelling Consols by the amount of £50,000,000, or by performing a similar operation on the very large floating debt. He commended the Chancellor of the Exchequer for this proposal because it was very different from what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol did in 1899, when he reduced the Sinking Fund by £2,000,000 a year. He thought it was very much to the credit of the right hon. Gentleman that he had not followed that very bad example.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had also dealt with other capital liabilities of the State, and here, he was afraid, they could not offer him the same congratulation. The debt in respect of military and naval works and similar undertakings amounted in all to £41,664,000. Was he right in that statement?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN assented.

*MR. McCRAE said that was an increase over last year of £10,000,000 in round figures. What he would like to impress upon the Committee was that the similar charge in respect of these works in 1895 only amounted to £3,092,624. He wished to point out to the Committee that at the beginning of these things the House did not realise where they were going to lead when the Bill was brought in. Although £300,000 was only to be paid this year, on any particular item the total expenditure might be £3,000,000 or £4,000,000. The Public Accounts Committee had pointed out the serious effect this system had on our national expenditure. The fact of the matter was that a large sum was being borrowed year by year. He understood that the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that a sum of £9,000,000 was again to be borrowed this year for similar works. If that was so it meant that the Sinking Fund was quite misleading, because we were paying off £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 for the redemption of the old debt, and re-creating about £9,000,000 of the new debt. The consequence was, if he followed the figures correctly——

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: This is really a matter of some importance. It is necessary when considering the debt incurred for capital expenditure that it should be borne in mind that that debt has its own sinking fund—a quite abnormally high sinking fund—and that it does not trench in any way on the sinking fund of the National Debt. I know that the hon. Gentleman is aware of that.

*MR. McCRAE said that was present to his mind, and the sum he had mentioned covered both sinking funds, but he did not wish to complicate his argument by referring to it. That was all very well, but they had to consider not only the debt that was incurred, but also the liability in respect of similar works which the House was already committed to. As far as he could gather, we had at least £20,000,000 expenditure still to meet with regard to military works. That was a very serious condition of matters. It meant, of course, that our floating debt had been largely increased. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had mentioned that the floating debt now amounted to £77,500,000. With the £10,000,000 proposed to be liquidated in ten years, and the other £4,000,000 provided for, there would still be a floating debt of £63,000,000, which was far too large. It was a danger to the State, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have taken this opportunity of dealing in the way he had suggested in a much more comprehensive fashion with the National Debt. In conclusion, he said that the House required much greater control over expenditure, because, after all, it was expenditure which produced this indebtedness. The expenditure last year on naval and military works was a little less than the estimate, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do well if he would state the figure which he estimated for naval and military works not yet completed.

He wished to refer to the question of last year's deficit. They had some very interesting arguments last year as to how that deficit of £5,415,000 was to be provided for. They now found that it was to be provided for by borrowed money taken from the Exchequer balances, £2,880,000, unclaimed dividends £1,000,000, and the realised surplus which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had last year £1,410,000. That meant really that the whole had been paid out of borrowed money, because if the Exchequer balances had not required to be strengthened, the surplus of last year of £1,410,000 would have gone, according to constitutional practice, to the reduction of the National Debt. There had now been a period of ten years of reckless expenditure, questionable finance, and shifting policy. He must congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer, inasmuch as he thought the right hon. Gentleman had taken a step in another direction; and he deserved credit for all that. It was, however, needless to say that the expenditure had never before been equalled, and that the country had no idea of its magnitude; and he thought it characterised a want of grip on the part of the Government of the national expenditure. There had been a tendency on the part of the Government, in dealing with all questions of taxation, to give to their own friends all the benefit, such as the doles in the Agricultural Rating Act, the Licensing Act, and Church schools, resulting in putting on a very large share of taxation on the indirect taxpayers. He supposed that it was in furtherance of the policy enunciated by the noble Lord the Member for Ealing, that this Government sought to relieve the rich at the expense of the poorer classes and provide for their friends, not only now when they were in office, but against the day when they were out of office. He would point out that the very difficulty of the situation in regard to our indebtedness was the Chancellor of the Exchequer's opportunity. The keystone of Mr. Gladstone's finance was to take advantage of such a situation to deal with the National Debt in a comprehensive way. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had dealt soundly with the revenue taxation and with the provision for expenditure; but the right hon. Gentleman ought to have gone a step further and done something in dealing in a comprehensive way with the National Debt; and if he did not see his way to recast our financial system, to broaden in reality the basis of taxation, so as, before the right hon. Gentleman or the Government went out of office, to have left a name for himself for having suited it to the changed conditions of our national expenditure.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) said there were several points on which Members on both sides of the House had always insisted upon that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had accepted. There were several points which they had pressed which the right hon. Gentleman had not accepted; but there was one great improvement in the form of the financial statement laid before the Committee. They were now able to see in one comprehensive view the exact financial position of the year, and they could judge to what extent the necessary resources for the year were derived from revenue or from borrowed funds. Another point to which special attention had been given in the Budget Statement was the immense improvement in the national strength, and the restoration to a high level of the national credit. Although he could have wished that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone further than he had done in strengthening the Sinking Fund he willingly recognised that the step he had taken was a distinct improvement.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had insisted upon the great distinction to be made between the dead-weight debt of the country and debt arising from various Works Acts. He ventured to maintain the view that there was really no generic difference whatever. Works Loan Acts' borrowings might be put in a different category if the operations were either productive or remunerative, or if the expenditure on them had in its nature anything in the direction of finance—if, for instance, making up for lost time in the past and putting our national defences once and for all on a good footing. But he saw in any charge on a Works Act no difference from expenditure on a national asset. [An Hon. Member: Uganda Railway.] That represented a very small fraction of the expenditure. A military harbour appeared to him to be no more a national asset than a battleship, or very little more, which was not charged upon Loan funds but upon Budget funds. One of the reasons why he praised so highly the change in the form of accounts was that he believed when the country understood the matter they would stop altogether those Works Loans Bills. He hoped that in the coming year the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he were still in office, would be able very largely to reduce the amount of £9,000,000 which he proposed to borrow in the course of the present financial year. If one viewed the financial position according to what he believed to be the rules of strict accounting, and if one set against the Sinking Fund the amount of new borrowing, the result of the year 1904, excluding the annuity for the repayment of the Works Loans Acts, would be an increase of debt of £628,000 as against an increase of the balances of £1,414,000, excluding the annuity, which amounted to the comparatively small figure of £1,000,000. The £1,000,000 did not appear clearly on the Paper, and ought to be shown with the other sinking fund. It had been said that the existence of a provision in the Votes for the repayment of borrowings under the Works Acts constituted a radical difference; but it was not as if the annuity was paid by some third party altogether independent of the country or the Treasury. It merely amounted to this, that in the annual Votes for the Army and Navy certain sums for the payment of the debt would be included in the future. The alteration was merely a promisory note drawn by a branch office and payable by the head office of a bank. It was not drawn by a third party with independent finances. In 1906, again excluding the annuity charges on the Votes which the Chancellor of the Exchequer said amounted to £1,000,000, we arrived at the fact that the new borrowing would be £9,000,000, as compared with a sinking fund, excluding the additional million, of £8,428,000. Therefore, there was a net increase of borrowing up to nearly £600,000, but even including the million we only got a net diminution of £400,000. Now his contention was, and he hoped it was not ungenerous, that the Committee should press for something even further than that. In the course of the last five years, owing to the South African War, the national indebtedness had increased by £155,000,000. He contended that in a year of fair prosperity, untroubled by warlike operations or extraordinary expenditure of any magnitude, a rich and powerful country like ours should do something more towards the reduction of indebtedness than a contribution of something under a million sterling.

With the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction of the floating debt he was in hearty agreement. He was also thoroughly in accord with him that the present moment would not be suitable for a large issue of Consols, and it was altogether out of the question to create a new form of National Loan. He did not believe any section of the community would view that with favour. He had heard with relief that the applications of the Treasury to the money market during the present year would not exceed £6,000,000 for the Irish land operations. They all hoped that the greatest parsimony would be exercised in the way of appeals for public subcription, and that the severity shown by the Treasury would find imitators among local bodies. If the measures proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not altogether fulfil their ideals, and if they were not absolutely heroic, he regarded them as thoroughly sound and practical. He was grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for having resisted all temptation to go in for a popular *ad-captandum* Budget and having dealt with the situation simply on its merits, and with a view to materially strengthening and re-enforcing the national finances.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said that they had all welcomed the words which fell from the right hon. Gentleman upon the question of loans. It was practically what had been said in the previous year on both sides of the House, and was substantially that while it was legitimate on certain exceptional occasions of an urgent character to borrow money, it ought not to become a part of the continuous finance of this country. That was what it had really become for a number of years. For years past they had had biennial Naval and Military Works Bills, and what he understood the right hon. Gentleman to contemplate was a cessation of those Bills in the future. He gathered that in the future no new works would be put into a Bill, either naval or military. Of course there were a certain number of works that would have to be finished under the existing system, but after that no new works were to be put in. But one thing had been lost sight of after Naval and Military Works Bills ceased to exist. There would be a lot of naval and military expenditure that was now borne on the Naval and Military Works Bills that would come back on to the Estimates, so they must look forward to a considerable increase in the Estimates of the future. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said he could only give a rough estimate of the amount wanted for the ensuing year, which he stated would be subject to revision, and, he hoped, reduction. They all joined in that hope and, seeing the right hon. Gentleman had put it at £9,000,000 and that last year the right hon. Gentleman required £10,000,000, there was every ground for the hope of reduction being realised. If, as the right hon. Gentleman stated, he did not expect to issue Exchequer Bills as he had done in previous years, it would be interesting to know how he proposed to get the money for the current Naval and Military Loans Acts in the ensuing year. The right hon. Gentleman also spoke of the £4,000,000 he was going to get from the Transvaal that he proposed to apply to the extinction of debt. Would the right hon. Gentleman say whether that was an estimate or a realised asset?

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the hon. Gentleman had misunderstood him. The £4,000,000 would be obtained partly from the sinking fund already available, and partly from the Transvaal. The repayment from the Transvaal came to £1,250,000, and it had already been completed, or if not completed, it would be completed in a few days.

Mr. BUCHANAN said he was afraid he had misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman. He was under the impression that the right hon. Gentleman stated that he was going to obtain this from the Transvaal. Another point which he would not labour was the Transvaal Loan of £30,000,000, because if it was possible to get something from the Transvaal on that account it need not now be considered, as the possibility was of a very remote character. They all welcomed the resolution that the Debt Charge was to be increased to £28,000,000. They had deplored the diminution that had taken place in the past. It had been a matter of regret that strenuous efforts had not been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the return of peace times to embark in some scheme for the reduction of debt. He had always thought that the country would have been willing to allow a good deal of the increased taxation that was imposed during the period of the war to remain on its shoulders if it had been sure that by so doing it had a prospect of working off a great portion of the debt incurred for that war. Whilst they welcomed the general review the right hon. Gentleman took of the conditions of the Excise and Customs revenue, they noticed one feature the right hon. Gentleman had not referred to, which was that the falling off of the Excise and Customs seemed to have been much greater in the last quarter of the year just expired than it had been formerly.

There was another point upon which he would like some explanation. He thought he heard the right hon. Gentleman say that the estimated return of a penny in the £ on income-tax for the ensuing year was only £2,300,000. Hitherto the estimate had always been £2,500,000.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, not the estimated return; what I said was that the amount I should lose by taking off a penny would be £2,300,000.

Mr. BUCHANAN said he must have misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman. He was sitting in the gallery and was afraid he must have misheard a very great deal of what the right hon. Gentleman said. Last year the right hon. Gentleman had taken £2,500,000 as the estimated yield of the income-tax, and that apparently was the high-water mark, because the income-tax tables for the past half-a-dozen years showed that the yield of a penny went on steadily increasing until about three years ago, when it touched £2,500,000. Since that time it had been stationary, and what he intended to ask was, had there been any verification of the figures since that time. He congratulated the Government on the fact that this was the first Budget for some years in which there had been any real attempt to diminish expenditure, or at least to make a determined stand against the continuously increasing expenditure. They welcomed the fact that it had been possible to put a curb on the increase of our national expenditure, and also the fact that the Government were making use of some of their surplus for the diminution of the burden of debt which was on the shoulders of the people, and they hoped that this was the first step towards a more economical and reasonable system of finance.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he thought it was perhaps more possible to express an off-hand opinion on this Budget than on almost any he had heard in this House, because it was so extremely simple. He had felt this year that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government with which he had to act must choose between bringing in a popular Budget or a sound Budget, and he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman most heartily upon bringing in a sound Budget. Whether it would become more popular in consequence of the reduction of the tea duty he would not stop to inquire. His efforts had always been directed towards sound finance, which meant mainly the extinction of debt.

He thought the wave of sobriety which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated was passing over the country had touched His Majesty's Government. There were indications of it in various directions, but in none had it given him more satisfaction than with regard to Supplementary Estimates. From the time the present Government came into office down to the present year, the Supplementary Estimates had practically never been less than £2,000,000, and last year they actually amounted to £4,600,000. This year, however, they amounted to only £700,000, which in itself was a proof that the Government had felt that "wave of sobriety" to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. Another proof was to be found in the Paper issued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that afternoon, in which for the first time were to be found the items "Estimated payments out of revenue assigned to Local Taxation Accounts," "Estimated expenditure chargeable against Capital," "Revenue assigned to Local Taxation Accounts," and "Borrowings to meet Expenditure chargeable against Capital." The giving of those items constituted a sound departure in the Budget Statement. Personally, he wished the right hon. Gentleman had gone a little further, and set forth also the Appropriations - in - Aid as well as the intercepted sum for the Local Taxation Account. But too much must not be expected at once. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had entered upon the path of true accountancy; he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would pursue it to the end, and that next year there would be a further account showing what were the estimated Appropriations - in - Aid. The National Accounts ought to be both complete, true, and intelligible; at present they were neither. In order to be all three they must include on the one side all receipts whatever, whether from taxes, from intercepted taxes, or from Appropriations-in-Aid, and on the other all outgoings whatever; for our account was a receipt and issue account. Besides this there should be a Debt account, and to both ample explanations might be added. He understood that the question was to be referred to the Public Accounts Committee. That was a most proper course, and he hoped that that body would be able to make suggestions which would tend to improve the accounts and to make them at once true and intelligible. But even with the inclusion of the items to which he had referred, the statement of the national finances would still be incomplete without the items of local expenditure, now amounting to £164,000,000 a year, and local debt, which had reached the appalling total of £469,000,000. What he would like to have on Budget night or soon after was a Statement from either the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the President of the Local Government Board of the year's local expenditure and local debt. The House would then have a complete conspectus of the national finances, but without these further items it was impossible to form a proper estimate of the true financial position of the country.

The "wave of sobriety" was apparent also in the fact that a certain amount of retrenchment was promised this year—a matter of £1,800,000. The field of retrenchment, properly worked, would yield not £1,800 000, but ten times that sum without any detriment to the public service. He deeply regretted, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman had not gone further. Still, it was a good beginning, it was a heading, for the first time in the history of the present Government, in the right instead of the wrong direction, and he congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon it. With regard to the estimates, however, he was afraid the mistakes made last year had never been equalled. According to the right hon. Gentleman's statement, there were mistakes of £500,000 on Customs, £750,000 on Excise, £650,000 on estate duties, and £1,250,000 on property and income-tax. It was true that these mistakes were not all one side; they were to a certain extent compensatory, but still they were all mistakes, amounting in the aggregate to over £4,000,000. That was a very unusual error for public Departments to make. With regard to the estate duties, the right hon. Gentleman had established a new system of collection which excluded the public from the office, a system which was destined to diminish and which had already diminished the receipts year by year, and it was to be hoped that when he again looked into the accounts he would see the advisability of restoring the old system. One of the mistakes to which he had referred was, he believed, the creation of the right hon. Gentleman himself, through his "hustling" of the income-tax payer. He did not sympathise with the income - tax payer for having to pay his tax at the right moment, but it would certainly be found that by the amount the right hon. Gentleman had "hustled" this year his receipts next year would be diminished, because a number of income-tax payers would, as a matter of fact, have paid two years tax in one year.

The most serious part of the Budget was the Debt; with that the right hon. Gentleman had dealt courageously and, on the whole, satisfactorily. What the right hon. Gentleman was pleased to call the "dead-weight debt" or the Funded Debt was really the least objectionable portion. The capital liabilities, which were equally "dead," were a much more objectionable form of debt. He had never been able to ascertain why they were called "capital liabilities," as they were no more a charge on capital than any other debt. The Funded Debt last year amounted to £762,629,000, and the capital liabilities to £31,868,000, or a total of £794,497,000. This year the Funded Debt had gone down to £755,072,000, but capital liabilities had gone up to £41,564,000, making a total of £796,636,000, or an increase of £2,139,000. There were, in addition, other serious liabilities, such as the contingent liabilities of the State, including the Saving Banks liability, and the guaranteed loans, in all which there had been immense recent increases. But, large as had been the increase in these and in the Funded Debt, there had been a far larger proportionate increase in the Unfunded Debt, and these irregular forms of debt were the most objectionable. Taking interest and allowances, the Unfunded Debt cost the country 3·29 per cent per annum. That was a very serious matter. The Unfunded Debt had increased by £4,000,000 during the year, but the right hon. Gentleman was going to pay off £4,000,000, partly out of his realised surplus, and partly out of payments due from the Transvaal, on which the right hon. Gentleman thought he could surely count.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Out of the New Sinking Fund, not out of the realised surplus.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said in that case he would have to find fault with the right hon. Gentleman for arresting the surplus on its way to the New Sinking Fund for the extinction of debt.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The realised surplus is the Old Sinking Fund, and one of the purposes to which that fund may be put, under the Act of 1875, is the strengthening of the balances, and I propose to apply the realised surplus to that purpose. With the New Sinking Fund and the Transvaal repayment I propose to extinguish £4,000,000 of the £14,000,000 Exchequer Bonds.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that, in view of the statement the Chancellor of the Exchequer had just made, he had no great quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman. It would be extremely improper to apply the surplus through the balances to purposes of expenditure, but since it was going to reduce the Unfunded

Debt, that was one of the most proper uses to which it could be put.

Then the right hon. Gentleman had made a provision of a somewhat novel character to pay off £10,000,000 of Unfunded Debt, and this was one of the most important features of the Budget. It was an entirely new order of provision, and seemed to be of the same nature as was sometimes made for the payment of Funded Debt by means of terminable annuities. This £10,000,000 would extinguish itself one-tenth in each year, and therefore more quickly than the ordinary terminable annuities. They were making a provision for the extinction of the Unfunded Debt under circumstances which absolutely secured that that particular sinking fund, which the £10,000,000 carried, could not be dealt with by any Chancellor of the Exchequer in the future, however nefarious he might be. He thought, while avowing that he did not yet profess completely to understand the full nature of the new proposals or how the £10,000,000 was to be issued, that was satisfactory. There was one other point which he wished to suggest. As the right hon. Gentleman had instituted quite a new method of dealing with the Unfunded Debt, he would suggest to him that he should consider the revival of the Exchequer Bill, which was formerly used with great advantage not only to the Exchequer itself but also to the outside public. At the present time they had no Exchequer Bill, and it had become extinct. Many of them had long advocated an increase in the fixed permanent charge, and he attached more importance to that increase which was now to be effected, making a permanent addition to the fixed charge of £1,000,000, and thus raising the charge itself to £28,000,000, than to any other feature in the Budget. His belief was that the House had now so roused itself and that the country had become so fully aware of the importance of guarding the Sinking Fund, that he did not think any future Chancellor of the Exchequer would be allowed to tamper with that charge. The addition of £1,000,000 to the fixed charge was an act of courage and propriety and was the soundest finance.

With regard to the reduction of the tea duty, he hoped that it would be popular, although he did not think it would have been so popular as a reduction of the income-tax. For his own part, he would as soon see the reduction made in the tea duty as upon the income-tax. This proposal gave an advantage of £1,500,000 to the drinkers of tea, and he took this action on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who said that it would give relief to every household in the Kingdom, as a proof that he at least did not believe that the foreigner paid that money, but that it was paid by the consumers of tea in this country. It was a most satisfactory Budget, and he congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon having resisted the temptation of making his office a means of acquiring popularity for the Government, and upon having instituted a system of very sound and very wholesome finance.

*Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the addition he had made to the Sinking Fund. He did not, however, like the way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to deal with the floating debt. He entirely agreed that that debt was a great deal too large, but his dislike to it was more in regard to the formation of another form of debt. They had sufficient forms of debt already, and if he could have merged this new proposal into a debt which already existed it would have been much better than the creation of a new form of debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was not creating Exchequer Bonds but a terminable annuity which might be drawn at any time. That was a novelty, and it did not get rid of one very great disadvantage, which was that it remained practically part of the floating debt that could not be taken up by the ordinary investor. It was perfectly true that they were tying up debt for a certain time, but if it was to be drawn at any time it would not be the kind of investment which ordinary people cared for, and it would not go into the hands of the ordinary investor, but would be taken up like the rest of the floating debt, principally in the city of London, depressing the money market there, and thereby raising the rate of interest against the interests of the whole community.

He was very glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had seen his way to take twopence off tea. He came down to the House that day rather expecting that it would be necessary for him to denounce the right hon. Gentleman for relieving the direct taxpayer instead of the indirect taxpayer. He noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that he did not consider that the income-tax should be left in time of peace at 1s. in the £. At the same time he did not think that indirect taxation ought to be left at the height it was at present in time of peace. The direct taxpayers had benefited to the extent of £5,000,000 not long ago, and while the indirect taxpayers were still charged £4,500,000 since the war taxation more than the direct taxpayers, they were still in the debt of the country, and indirect taxes even beyond those upon tea ought to be taken off before the income-tax was reduced. He admitted that that was not the popular view in the House, but he believed that it was sound, and it was only fair and just to the poorer classes of the community. It would also be in the general interests of the country, because he was sure that the amount of indirect taxation, more especially that portion of it upon food, was at present depressing the whole trade of the country, and in his opinion it was the main cause of trade depression at the present moment.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out that Customs were £500,000 less, and Excise £750,000 less. He did not think there was any surer proof that the trade of the country was bad than these figures. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the reduction in Excise was mainly owing to the more temperate habits of the people of this country, but he was afraid that this was rather an exaggeration, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find in the coming year that the amount of liquor consumed would increase again. At the present moment he thought that this decrease was a sign of bad trade. Undoubtedly the fiscal controversy had produced a certain amount of bad trade, although he believed that the people were beginning to regain confidence. The present high rate of interest upon money was detrimental to trade both mercantile and industrial, and this again brought them back to the main reason for the bad home trade, namely, the very heavy taxation upon the country. They could not put 4d. upon the income-tax, increase the sugar duty, place a duty upon coal, and corn, and increase the duties on beer, spirits, tobacco, and tea without seriously interfering with the prosperity of the people. The fact was that at the present time people had not got so much money to spend, and therefore they could not buy the articles they required, and trade suffered in consequence in all directions. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave them some figures to show how the wealth of the country had increased at a greater rate than the expenditure. He took forty years from 1864 to 1904, and he stated that whilst in the year 1864–5 the national income was £700,000,000, in 1904 it had risen to £1,750,000,000 or 150 per cent. He further stated that the expenditure in the same period had only risen by 125 per cent., showing that the wealth of the country had grown more rapidly than the expenditure. Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer was no doubt right in those figures, he did not think he would have got so satisfactory a result if he had taken the period before the war. He had been reading an article by Lord Welby which showed that up to that time the wealth of the country had been increasing at a greater ratio than the population, and showing that since the war the taxable capacity of the people had almost ceased to have an increasing ratio at all. The people were practically being taxed up to the point where the fertility of the resources of the country had almost ceased to increase. Lord Welby took the period from 1894–5 and 1897–8, and he pointed out that in the three years just before the war the natural increase of the taxes, making allowance for all new taxation, was £8,500,000, whilst the increase of population was 1 per cent., and therefore this would only have been something under £3,000,000 at the same rate. Then he took the last seven years and he found that the natural increase in the growth of taxation was £7,000,000 or £1,000,000 a year, but the natural increase in ratio to the growth of population would have been only £6,000,000, so the net result had only been an increase of £100,000, while it had been £2,000,000 in the previous period. The taxable capacity of the people had ceased to be fertile and had ceased to grow, and he believed that that was owing to the vast taxation which the war had necessitated.

He was very glad to hear what had been said about capital expenditure, and there was no doubt that the attention of the country was being directed to this question. This was most important, because hitherto the expenditure had increased very much in this direction, and the growth in the last fifteen years had been portentous. They had spent £52,000,000 upon these loans, and the worst of it was that the sinking fund and the interest that had accrued had not been paid out of the Consolidated Fund, but had been buried away in the Estimates, and this fact had not been fully recognised by the public. In the past, Parliament had lost control over this expenditure, and the Public Accounts Committee had condemned by Resolution the growth of this system. This was getting a very serious matter indeed. Obviously when these Estimates were not laid before Parliament there was great extravagance on the part of officials. It might be said that these works were all of a permanent character, and that it was not fair to charge the whole on the present taxpayers. It was a great deal more unfair to charge it on the future. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the sinking funds were very severe, and that the debt was being rapidly paid off. The hon. Member said he had occasion to apply to the Secretary to the Treasury the other day for information, and he asked what sinking fund there was in respect of the Pacific Cable. He was informed that the Pacific Cable loan annuities were running for fifty years. He did not think there was a cable fifty years in existence. His impression was that the first American cable which was laid had not been used for some years, and it was impossible to conceive that a cable should last for fifty years. The claim put forward that it was sound finance to set up these annuities to reduce the debt in a short period was not borne out by the annuities of the Pacific Cable. It was said that this was exceptional expenditure. If it was exceptional something could be said for it, but so far from its being exceptional it had been growing year by year. These items ought year by year to come on the Estimates.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said it seemed to him that this Budget marked a new departure, and the House might congratulate itself. He had always advocated that we should do much more than we were doing to pay off debt. It seemed to him that a nation such as this with its revenue of 1,700 or 1,800 millions a year did not spend much on the reduction of debt. He thought we should increase the permanent sinking fund, and he was delighted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been able to resist the temptation to secure popularity by a greater reduction of taxation and had devoted a large part of his surplus to the reduction of the stupendous debt we now owed. He did not mind telling the right hon. Gentleman candidly that he should have preferred if he had applied the whole of the surplus to paying off debt. He should have preferred if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not reduced the duty on tea. It had to be remembered that we were living in serious times. He did not agree with the hon. Member for the Luton Division that the taxable power of the nation was very nearly at an end in many directions. This nation, though highly taxed, was not so highly taxed as many European countries. It seemed to him, considering that our Imperial and local taxation was going up by such leaps and bounds, our children or grandchildren would enormously suffer for it He thought, therefore, the one and only practical way of reducing expenditure was to increase the Sinking Fund to pay off the Debt. It might seem rather an anomaly to increase the Sinking Fund to pay off debt. His idea, of course, was that the real cause of our increased expenditure was the House of Commons itself. There was no doubt whatever that they were continually demanding increased expenditure on everything. Hon Members on one side or the other had each a particular fancy, and advocated an extension of expenditure in that respect. He was delighted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been bold enough to give £1,000,000 more to the repayment of this debt. Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done a good work, after all we were only setting aside the same amount as Sir Stafford Northcote did when he first instituted the fund. Consols at that time paid a higher rate of interest than now. While he was extremely glad that this was being done, he would urge the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether our expenditure had not so largely increased that something more even should not be done now to repay the Debt. When one came to think of it £10,000,000 a year was not, after all, a very large sum to set aside for paying off our debt. The reduction of debt seemed to him to be a most important preparation for the future. It would tend to the improvement of the money market and the position of the finances of this country.

There was nothing which, in his opinion, would have a greater effect on the money market than the step the right hon. Gentleman had taken. During the past ten years an enormous increase in the expenditure of the country had taken place. He would not discuss why the war took place; the fact remained that, owing to the large amount of debt which had been repaid, we were able to raise £100,000,000 for that war without much fear of the effect of it, and without feeling the pressure at the moment. Therefore, we were practically bound, considering that we got the benefit of the transaction, to go on increasing the repayment of the Debt in proportion to the wealth and development of the country. The country had increased in riches to an enormous extent. There was, indeed, a great amount of poverty, but when they looked at the condition of the income-tax which, after all, was one of the best tests there was of national progress, there was no doubt whatever, that the wealth of the country during the past fifty years had enormously increased. During the next twenty or thirty years we might hope for peace throughout the world owing to the awful example of the war which was now going on, and that was one reason why we should make a great effort to reduce the Debt.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to the subject of the taxes on alcohol, and pointed out that there had been a considerable reduction. Nobody would rejoice more than himself if this reduction were brought about by an improvement in the condition of the people through a desire not to drink alcohol to the extent they did. He did not wish to be pessimistic. It was probable that part of the reduction was due to that cause, but he could not think that it was to a very great extent a matter they could congratulate themselves upon at present. Statistics showed that even now we spent very nearly £20 a family on alcohol per annum. That was a very large expenditure, although it was less than it used to be. He had no hesitation in saying that a nation that could spend within a few pence of £20 a family per annum on alcohol could afford to pay off a good deal more than £10,000,000 a year of debt. He should be glad if by any possible means they could divert a good deal of this money to the payment of debt. He was not a fanatic on the temperance question, but it could hardly be said that the people were overtaxed when they voluntarily took upon themselves this enormous incubus. The people would be healthier and better off if they drank less. He understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer's position and there was a great deal to be said for it. Although twopence per pound was a nice reduction on the tea duty, he would point out that as the poorer classes bought tea by the ounce and half-ounce they would not get much benefit out of the reduction. He was convinced that these remissions of taxes did not reach the consumer who was in a small way. He thought the tea dealer and the great flourishing companies which in the past had been making large sums would continue to make larger sums. Those who bought by the pound would get a benefit, but the buyers of ounces and half ounces would not get very much benefit. What happened in the case of the reduction of the tobacco duty would be repeated. Those who bought tobacco by the ounce and half-ounce got no benefit at all.

He thought the right hon. Gentleman was not fair in his reference to the difference in relief to the direct and indirect taxpayer. It was not unreasonable to say that the direct taxpayer had received greater benefit than the indirect. It must be borne in mind that the death duties might be called a direct payment because they came from the descendants of those who left estates. There was no doubt that the direct taxpayer did pay an enormous sum for taxation. Hon. Gentlemen opposite should remember that the income-tax was not a rich man's tax. There was a popular delusion that it was a rich man's tax. No doubt many of those who paid the tax were rich, but the great burden of the tax fell upon the classes who were the most heavily taxed in the country. These people paid their full share of indirect taxes, and in addition paid a very large proportion of the direct taxation, and especially the income-tax. It must be remembered also that they paid a very large proportion of the death duties. It was true that a large portion of the death duties came from millionaires, and no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer regretted that he had not more of them this year. But, after all, the great bulk of the death duties came from the smaller estates which were distributed among small people. The result was that those who received small legacies of £2,000 or £3,000, if the matter was worked out on the annuity system, would be found to be paying considerably on receiving these estates. He thought himself that the income-tax payers in having to pay 1s. in the £ were taxed extremely high. It was an exorbitant rate which twenty, thirty, or forty years ago would never have been dreamt of. This enormous tax was due to the general spirit which prevailed that the State should do so many things more now than in former times. They were running to a great extreme, and demanding from the State many things they ought not to demand. He had always been an advocate of individual effort and self-reliance, and he believed that the many things which were now being done at the expense of the State were tending rather to take away the self-reliance of the people than to encourage them to do what they ought to do for themselves.

On the question of the floating debt he fully agreed with what had been said. He regarded this debt as a great danger to the community. It had caused a great deal of trouble in the money market and in the business world. It was a thing which ought never to have been allowed to grow as it had done. He was one of those who believed that before very long we should get the first instalment of £10,000,000 from the Transvaal. When received, he hoped it would go at once to the reduction of the floating debt. Although the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was over sanguine as to the date when it would be paid, the hon. Member was satisfied that it would be paid. He was delighted that an effort had been made in the direction of the payment of debt because he believed nothing would strengthen this country more in the eyes of the world than the reduction of our debt. A wise Chancellor of the Exchequer did not look for popularity in taking off taxes, but tried to do the best he could for the country by devoting a large sum to the getting rid of debt which, if the day should come when we should not be so well off, would be a heavy millstone hanging round our necks.

*Sir WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer appeared to have taken the line of least resistance. He noticed that when the details of the Budget were being unfolded there were several "old hands" within these four walls; and he was not sure that any of these "old hands" could have done better in the circumstances than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Indeed, some of his proposals seemed to have been devised by an "old hand." No doubt the strengthening of the Sinking Fund would improve the credit of the Government in the City, and the reduction of the duty on tea, which was so largely consumed as an article of food by the poor, did in effect disarm criticism very largely from the Opposition side of the House. That reduction was not a very substantial one in itself—amounting to only £1,500,000, but they had to be thankful for comparatively very small mercies. It might be described as a mercy of microscopic dimensions but when they recalled the fact that the tea duty and the sugar duty were war taxes they had a right to expect, now that the war was over, there should be a reduction in these duties. He hoped they would be removed before long, and that the coal duty, which was handicapping a very important trade of the country, would also be removed. The coal tax, it was agreed, was a daily, hourly, handicap to a very important trade in the country, and some who said when the tax was introduced that the coal supply of this country would not last very long, must have had their fears allayed by the Report of the Royal Commission, and therefore they might now reasonably expect the support of those hon. Members in demanding the early repeal of the coal tax. If it could be shown that employment had diminished in consequence of that tax, its removal could not be a matter of indifference to an enlightened and sympathetic Government. Indeed, he knew that the Government were interested in removing hindrances to the employment of the people, or they would not have agreed to the appointment of the Industrial Alcohol Committee. The Report of that Committee was on the point of being presented, and although it was not open to him to say anything about its details, yet as a member of the Committee he could say that the Committee was animated in its preparation by a sincere desire to remove shackles from industry where they could be proved to exist.

He was glad to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that things, on the whole, had turned out better last year than they expected at the beginning of the year. That proved that trade had not been so bad as had been contended on so many platforms. He expected that the Budget would be criticised, not so much because of the methods proposed for raising money as because of the large amounts contemplated to be raised. Although they had paid more than ever they still owed more than ever. It almost seemed as if they had been paying twice over. It was like a man who had been drinking whiskey and wanted another glass; and the publican said his customer might have another glass if he paid for the last. "But," said the toper to the publican, "have you paid for it yourself?" "Yes," replied the publican. "Well," answered the toper, "there is no need to pay for the same thing twice over." This country had been paying or would have to pay not only twice, but many times over in the shape of extra taxation or accumulated indebtedness. It was needless to say that our great National Debt was a heavy burden on the nation. The United States, simultaneously with a great increase of wealth, had been substantially reducing their national debt; whereas ours had been growing all the while. Of two rival nations, if one added to its burdens by piling up debt and another diminished its burdens by paying off debt, it was easy to see, other things being equal, which one would come out victor in the end. They had heard a great deal about reduction of armaments. They prided themselves, and very justly, on their improved foreign relations at the present time; and on the Anglo-French Agreement. He hoped matters would not end there; but that the same statesmanship which had concluded that and other agreements would render a further service to humanity by inducing the leading nations to reduce *pro rata* their armaments. If that could be accomplished, it was clear that the safety of our Empire would not be imperilled in any way, for it would remain relatively the same, while the comfort and happiness of our people would, owing to their diminished burdens, be enormously increased.

*Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he had heard nineteen Budgets, but never one which had been received with such approval as that just introduced by his right hon. friend. He must congratulate the right. hon. Gentleman very much on his having had the courage to reduce the tea duty by one-fourth. He looked upon that reduction with special pleasure. It would encourage production of tea almost entirely within the British Empire, because the tendency more and more was to consume British-grown rather than China tea. Therefore, it would be received with as much favour in India as in this country. He wished to draw attention to the splendid results of the investment in 1875, by this country, in Suez Canal shares. We held 176,602 shares and Lord Beaconsfield paid for them £22 15s. per share, and they were now worth £185. In other words, that for which we paid £4,000,000 was now worth nearly £33,000,000 sterling, on which we were receiving £1,040,000 a year or 26 per cent. How was that large dividend earned? Mainly by British ships. Of the forty principal steamship companies whose vessels made passages through the canal, all but fifteen were British; and of the 11,000,000 tons of shipping using the Canal no less than 6,500,000 were British. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he did not consider that some part of the enormous dividend of 26 per cent., or had been, which reimbursed three times over the original investment, should not be devoted to lightening the burden on the ships which earned the income? He understood that it had been accepted some time ago that the Canal dividend should not exceed 25 per cent., and that all profit over that should go to the benefit of the shipping using the canal. The Suez Canal Company conducted the business most admirably. They had reduced the time of passage to an average of seventeen hours, and had increased the pilots and the passage accommodation. But it was a sore point with British shipowners that the Canal rules provided for the inclusion in the taxable tonnage of a ship all spaces available for the carriage of cargo, stores, or passengers, irrespective of the fact whether such were actually carried on any particular voyage. Although the British Government was represented by three directors, and the British shipowners by seven directors, there was great difficulty in reducing the tax on deck erections and the ordinary tax of 8 francs per ton. The income of the canal was no less than £4,500,000 last year, and the working expenses only 25 per cent., and he thought that part of the 26 per cent. dividend received by the British public should go to the relief of the shipowners using the Canal. It was perfectly easy to do it if some of the dividend were applied to relieve some of the charges which pressed so heavily upon British shipping, such as the light dues. It would be a very great advantage to the British seafaring community, and would only be a legitimate return for the enormous sums earned for the nation by the British traffic through the canal. He also thought something should be done to increase the voting power of this country in the affairs of the canal. We owned 176,000 shares, which was about two-fifths of the whole, and we had ten directors on the board out of thirty-two, but we only had a voting power of 250 shares, which was far less than we were entitled to.

Mr. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) said he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on his Budget, not because it was a satisfactory Budget, but because it was less unsatisfactory than those of previous years. It was so far satisfactory because it showed a tendency in the right direction, and also that in so far as it had provided for the expenditure of the year it had done so in a sound and satisfactory way. He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find that the Exchequer Bonds he was going to issue for the repayment of the £10,000,000 of floating debt would be so popular with the public as he anticipated. People did not like these investments that were always being taken up. The Committee must not run away either with the idea that there was a large reduction of expenditure this year. They must remember that the expenditure last year was not up to the Estimate, and that therefore the actual reduction this year was less by that amount. He did not agree with those who accused the right hon. Gentleman of hustling up the payment of the income-tax. It ought to be paid sooner than it was now paid. It was not now paid until the fourth quarter of the year, and the Committee owed their thanks to the right hon. Gentleman and the Inland Revenue Department for hurrying these people up. He had not an atom of sympathy with those who, having taken as it were nine months credit, complained, when the time came that they had to pay, that they were being hustled. It was unfair and unjust to those who did pay their taxes when they were due. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to making some difference in the income-tax charges on the various classes of income. There was no difficulty whatever in having a different rate of taxation upon incomes earned to that on incomes derived from investments. He thought incomes from investments should pay a higher rate of taxation altogether than those earned.

They were all glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman of the more sober habits of the community and the consequent decrease in the consumption of beer and spirits, but he did not think that the lower consumption was due so much to the greater sobriety of the people as to their smaller spending capacity. He had noticed that the revenue from the consumption of liquor had always risen or fallen with the increase or decrease of trade, although we were growing more sober, as was proved by the fact that for the last thirty years when trade increased the corresponding increase of this revenue had not been so great as in the previous years. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the decrease in the revenue from drink this year was not due in any way to legislation, for nobody could say that the so-called temperance measure of the Government was anything of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be a little anxious about the gap that in the future would be created in the revenue by the diminution of the consumption of liquor, but he need have no fear, because when the people gave up wasting their money in this way they would be 15s. in the £ better off, and would provide a larger revenue in other ways. He thought at one time, when the right hon. Gentleman referred to the Gentleman who paid nothing in taxation until the tax was put upon sugar, that he had discovered a way of taxing the teetotaler who, he quite admitted, was in a favoured position, especially if he did not smoke, but he had been disappointed. The difficulty was to find something that that class did consume which other people did not that could be taxed, and that had defied the ingenuity of every Chancellor of the Exchequer up to the present time.

He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing in condemnation of the large expenditure of the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had usually treated them generally to a strong expression of his opinion as to the serious danger attending the great increase of the national expenditure which, although it might not have had the effect he desired upon the House, gave them an indication of the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequor of the day. He could not understand why, since 1897–8, there should have been an increase of £30,000,000 in our naval and military expenditure. He was glad something was going to be done to deal with the Unfunded Debt of £77,000,000, because a floating debt was a very serious burden on the trade of the country. This country had held its position in the trade of the world owing to the control of finance which enabled it to finance large foreign contracts, and now that other countries, especially Germany and the United States of America, could also put finance behind their contracts, competition was much more keen, and it became far more necessary for us to have command of that loose capital which had really been the means of securing these large contracts in the past. It was not to duties and that kind of folly to which we must look to improve our trade. Our exports were greater now than ever they had been. The weakness was at home in the too heavy expenditure of the country. That was what was diminishing the spending capacity of the people and the power of the manufacturer to keep his works up to the standard of efficiency to enable him to meet this competition. Putting in new and up-to-date machinery meant paying out capital, and the higher the rate of interest was the more difficult it was for the manufacturer to lay down new plant and machinery.

He thought it came badly from the Government to reproach the local authorities for their expenditure, when it was borne in mind that much of that expenditure had been made on remunerative undertakings which would benefit the municipalities, and that it was the present Government and its predecessors who had encouraged the extravagance of the local authorities by granting them subsidies, which were always an encouragement of extravagance. The Financial Secretary had told the Committee that one reason for the expenditure had been that everyone pressed for more expenditure. That had always been so, and it was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to sit like a watch-dog on the national purse and refuse to concede those demands. It was because the Government in power was weak that they had not resisted the pressure put upon them, and that the expenditure which this Budget showed so little tendency to rebuke had so enormously increased.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

EXCHEQUER BONDS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding £10,000,000 be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000. That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he could not help thinking that the satisfaction which had been expressed at the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman was a sign of how little the House and country expected from the present occupants of the Treasury Bench. The miserable reduction of £1,500,000 on the present scale of taxation three years after the war in South Africa had ceased was the strongest possible condemnation of the capabilities of the present Government. No one would have believed that three years after the close of the war this country would have found itself still at the height of war taxation, because the 2d. which had been taken off tea was not put on for the purposes of the war, but to meet the deficit of £5,500,000 twelve months ago. Three years after the close of the war the sugar tax, a tax which bore most hardly on the poor, and most hardly upon one of the most promising trades of the country, was still in operation. The tea tax was still 50 per cent. more than it was before the war broke out. We still had the income-tax at 1s. instead of 8d., another 50 per cent. addition. The war tax on beer and spirits was still in existence, and our military and naval expenditure was £34,000,000 above the peace level. Those who were thankful for such a Budget under these circumstances must be thankful for very small mercies indeed.

Perhaps the most interesting portion of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was that in which he dealt with the decline of receipts from Customs and Excise. He told the Committee that from the year 1900 there had been a steady diminution from those sources. What were the facts? Everyone knew perfectly well that as soon as the froth of Jingoism disappeared the sobriety of the people increased, that as the practice of drinking went down so Liberalism went up, and it was doubly satisfactory to find that since the war fever had died down there had been considerable sobriety in drink, as in other ways. The right hon. Gentleman had attributed the decrease in the revenue from the consumption of liquor to the fact that the people took their pleasures in a more rational way. He should be glad to think that the right hon. Gentleman was right in attributing it to that cause. He himself had had some little experience which bore out the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, and one of the elements which tended to the decrease of the liquor traffic was no doubt the increased facilities, such as electric tramways, which carried people quickly out and away from the great centre of industry in which they earned their living. He agreed with the hon. Member for the Spen Valley that the Chancellor need have no fear of the revenue decreasing in consequence of the increase of the sobriety of the people. The revenue which that would produce in other ways would more than compensate for the present wasteful expenditure in drink.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that what some of them might venture to call "the hustling" of the income-tax payers had resulted in £800,000 being collected in excess of what was collected last year in the same time. In his opinion the right hon. Gentleman had under-estimated the amount he had got in that manner, and he would like to know upon what the right hon. Gentleman had based that estimate. He had promised a Return to the hon. Member for Edinburgh showing what amount of income-tax had been paid up to the 1st of March last year as compared with previous years. Unfortunately that statement was not to hand, otherwise they might have compared it. He would like to know when that Return would be ready.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) said he hoped it would be in the hands of Members in a very short time from now.

MR. WHITLEY said he hoped it would be in the hands of the Committee before the Income-tax Resolution was discussed. That was the point on which the discussion as to the soundness of that estimate depended. The present Budget was the most hum-drum Budget it was possible to conceive, the one special point about it was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not had the courage to remit any of the burdens which pressed most heavily on trade. The tax on tea would indirectly help in that direction, but there were two great taxes which were as great a tax upon trade as they were upon the consumer; he referred to the sugar tax and the coal tax. The great inspiring feature of Budgets of bygone years had been that Chancellors of those periods had had the courage to remit taxes which affected trade so that the removals in that direction would tend to increase trade and bring in further revenue. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer did not believe in free-trade, and, therefore, it was, perhaps, too much to expect that he would remove restrictions upon trade; although, had he had the courage to do so he would have found that the increased freedom of trade would have resulted in the future in a far greater revenue.

The point in the Budget to which most attention would probably be given was the Resolution with regard to the floating debt. The Resolution read from the Chair ought, in his opinion, to have been placed on the Paper of the House in order that Members might have had an opportunity of considering it before being called upon to discuss and decide it. He did not mean that it should have been placed upon the Paper before the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his statement. But inasmuch as there was no particular urgency and no sufficient demand made for its being discussed in a hurry, after twelve o'clock at night he thought the Government might see their way to allow the discussion on this Resolution to stand over until to-morrow when the Committee would see the Resolution upon the Paper. Next December £14,000,000 fell due for payment which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not meet; therefore he had come forward with a proposal to spread the repayment over a further term of ten years. That was the very thing that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol tried to guard against when he introduced that proposal to this House. He made those short terms for the express purpose of compelling the House, in so far as he could compel it at all, to meet its obligations. In 1900 the Member for West Bristol said—

> "I do not propose to ask for any permanent borrowing power; I desire to adhere to the principle that we should as far as possible ear-mark our borrowing for the purposes of this war as temporary borrowing, and that it should be automatically pointed out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day, whether I occupy the position, or it is occupied by anybody else, that it is his duty at the earliest possible time to make provision for the reduction of the loan."

And then, when the matter came up on the further stage, he was challenged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, the late Sir William Harcourt, who quoted his declaration and said—

> "Assuming the borrowing, I approve his declaration that he will not make it a permanent borrowing, but will ear-mark it as temporary borrowing. That shows, as far as the circumstances admit, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has a sound financial conscience."

Where had the sound financial conscience gone at the end of five years? Sir William Harcourt went on to say this was an excellent principle and he only hoped the Member for West Bristol might be the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day to act upon it. This, he (Mr. Whitley) thought, showed as clearly as possible that this borrowing was for the term of five years for the express purpose of making the House and the country set its house in order after the war was over, and he never imagined that they would be actually unable to meet their liabilities until December of the present year, their taxation at the full height of the war level, and be compelled to ask their creditors to be good enough to take payment for ten years at the rate of £1,000,000 per year, instead of being able to pay off that small portion of the floating debt. Let them observe what happened. By extending this first portion of the war loan over ten years they made it overlap a number of other items which would fall due within that period, and so they would be obliged to go on with one after another of those debts falling in, never able to meet them when due. This, in his opinion, was far from being courageous finance; it was pushing their liabilities on to the future, on to other shoulders; and it was, above all, shirking the position to which the Member for West Bristol wished to bring the House.

He had often protested against the continuation of war expenditure. He pointed out four years ago that unless a very strong hand was kept over all the Departments, expenditure which crept in under the excuse of the war would remain as permanent expenditure and would never disappear; and he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he could put in a separate column expenditure which had arisen out of the war, so that they should have it clearly in front of them and that their financial conscience should never be satisfied till it was cleared away. But nothing of the sort was done, and the Departments, all of them, had allowed the war standard to become a minimum standard for the future. It would require a man of a great deal more courage than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer to compel the Departments to reduce their claims on the public to a proper standard. This, he thought, was a correct description of the financial operation which was proposed in the Resolution before the House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that he was going to raise this money at once, although it was not wanted for the particular purpose it was to be raised for till next December. In the meantime, he was going to apply it to the ordinary purposes of the revenue. No doubt he would make some saving in the amount of interest he would otherwise have to pay on borrowings on ways and means, but for the space of nine months, till next Christmas, he was actually adding £10,000,000 to the liability of the country. If we were only going to pay off our floating debt of £77,000,000 at the rate of £1,000,000 a year, where were we? Surely the amount of our floating debt ought to be got back to something like £20,000,000 or £25,000,000, which was considered to be the outside amount a few years ago. If, taking £50,000,000 as the surplus above the normal amount, we were only going to pay it off at the rate of £1,000,000 a year, he thought it was a very unsatisfactory state of things, and they could not look forward with satisfaction to the money market being left with this amount of national bonds or bills floating about for all that length of time.

He would like to point out that it had a very serious effect in many ways. It raised the rate of interest for all short loans all over the country. He knew a town whose rates were actually increased 8d. or 10d. in the pound simply by the extravagance of the present Government having forced up the rate of interest in the money market to such an extent that they had to pay extravagant prices for short-term loans. It also had the additional effect that contracts were deferred, works were restricted; and it had a great deal to do with the congestion of the labour market and the lack of employment. Municipal loans in nearly all cases were productive expenditure, they had assets at the back of them; and with such things as electric tramways they increased the happiness and health of the people and had the additional benefit of reducing the drinking at the same time. It was expected, when this floating debt was created, now nearly five years ago, that it would have been paid off, a large part, before now. One great resort was the £30,000,000 from the Transvaal in the form of a war contribution. He took this deferred payment to mean that the Chancellor of the Exchequer really did not hope to get this war contribution at all. If there were any reasonable prospect of it coming, and it could be devoted, as it ought to be, towards the reduction of this floating debt, there would be no need for these expediencies; and he feared it was because the Chancellor of the Exchequer had already given up hope of any receipts from that source that he had been obliged to confess that he could not meet his obligations and ask that payment should be spread over the ensuing ten years. For this reason he (Mr. Whitley) was for one rather suspicious of this so-called courageous dealing with the floating debt. It meant to his mind a much slower dealing with the floating debt than they were entitled to expect. It meant a confession that we were not going to get the war contribution from the Transvaal, it meant that the Government had no hope of getting Estimates down to a reasonable figure. Their windfalls ought to have been applied to the more steady reduction of the National Debt, but they had the Chancellor of the Exchequer first of all reducing the amount applied to the Sinking Fund, then suspending the Sinking Fund altogether, and now coming and claiming credit for the restoration of the small sum of £1,000,000, which was very much less than was anticipated by his predecessor at the time the Debt was created. He was glad the Budget was not worse than it was. It might easily have been so, but he could not help voicing his protest that, three years after the conclusion of the war, we should be in a position neither to see nor anticipate from those in power any substantial reduction of our national expenditure, and that we should be obliged to come to such small shifts even for dealing with the floating debt which had been hampering us so long.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) said he rejoiced that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had seen his way to take off the 2d. per pound extra on tea, because he was sure it was felt in almost every poor household throughout the length and breadth of the land. He protested against it last year, and he was very glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer had seen his way to take it off. He regretted deeply that the additional 1d. on the income-tax still remained. He was sure everybody felt that the time had come for the relief of the income-tax payer, and that no relief was to be given would be resented. An income-tax of 1s. in the pound in times of peace was a very disturbing matter indeed, and he was afraid, if people got it into their heads that 1s. was to be a permanent tax, there would be considerable dissatisfaction with the Government in power. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he had no money to give relief, but he might very well, out of a huge expenditure of £142,000,000, have found some direction in which he could have effected economies and found the necessary money to give relief to the income-tax payer to the extent of, at all events, 1d. in the £. When he first entered

Parliament the expenditure was about £90,000,000, and it had gone on increasing ever since. First by moderate steps, but, since the adoption of the First Lord's scheme for dealing with Supply, by leaps and bounds. Until the House of Commons resumed its proper control over Supply and examined every Vote, expenditure would not only keep up but increase. The guillotining of Supply must be stopped, and the closure resorted to much less frequently.

He regretted the Transvaal Government had not yet made any contribution towards the cost of the war. The "*quasi* legal obligation," as described by the Colonial Secretary, might have been turned into a proper legal obligation by a payment on account, and the payment of, say, £1,000,000, which he thought the Transvaal could very well afford, would have enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make a reduction in the income-tax. He could not associate himself with the views of the hon. Member for Halifax with regard to the Debt. He agreed that we ought to pay off as much debt as we incurred, but why we should be saddled with the debt of generations before he could not understand. As to posterity, it should be remembered that they would derive far more benefit from our extended colonial possessions than we should.

He regretted the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not looked around for some new source of revenue. Personally he was in favour of the taxation of imported goods, but until the time came when that could be done it was necessary to look elsewhere. One possible source of revenue was a tax on aliens; that would probably put a stop to alien immigration. Another was the taxation of land values, from which he believed considerable revenue might be derived without pressing unjustly upon any class of the community. Further money could be found by retrenchment in the Civil Service. He was not in favour of reduction in the Army and Navy, but in the Civil Service he believed there was a most lamentable waste of money. He wished to call attention to another great waste of public money. When the Land Bill was before the House he expressed his disapproval of certain financial proposals contained in it, and a great many other hon. Members shared his views upon that point. Last year the Government issued £5,000,000 of land stock at £87 per £100, and the price of the stock afterwards went up to £92, causing a loss to the Treasury upon every £100 issued of £5. That loss altogether came to about £300,000. Was that a business-like way of going about a transaction of that kind? This year another £6,000,000 of land stock was issued at £89, and the present price was £95, a difference of £6 on every hundred. Altogether there had been a loss of £900,000 on these two issues. What other Exchequer in the world could be conducted upon those lines? If they were to continue to have such a great waste of public money how could they stop their expenditure increasing? He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say something on this point in his reply. He could not see why the right hon. Gentleman could not have waited until the money market had improved and then the Irish land stock might have been issued at a price nearer its proper value. He did not know who had got the benefit of that transaction. If any hon. Member would go through the Estimates, he would see on every page opportunities for effecting large reductions in the expenditure. He felt confident that great disappointment would be experienced amongst manufacturers when they realised that the Government had taxed the people so much that they had reached the limit of their paying capacity, and that feeling would not be removed when they read that in this Budget the Government had turned a deaf ear to the demand of the commercial classes who, notwithstanding their devotion during the war, were still called upon to pay an income-tax of 1s. in the pound.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said that so far as the surplus was concerned this was a sound Budget. The hon. Member for West Islington said that, in disposing of this surplus, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had adopted methods of sound conservative finance, but he might have said this was a sound Liberal Budget. The Chancellor of the

Exchequer, in choosing tea as the article to be relieved of taxation was, he imagined, only doing so because he had been convinced of the justice of this course by the arguments addressed to him last year from the Opposition side of the House, in which they pointed out the unfairness of the incidence of taxation, and he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had taken so early an opportunity of redressing to some extent this injustice. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he had not enough funds to reduce the income-tax, and at the same time to provide a sinking fund for the new bonds of £10,000,000. If he had taken £500,000 instead of £1,000,000 and spread the repayment of the bonds over twenty years, he would then have had £2,000,000 with which to reduce the income-tax.

The Opposition were unanimously pleased that the indirect taxpayer had been the recipient of the right hon. Gentleman's bounty this year. The working classes were by far the heaviest taxed of all classes in the community. Last year he presented the Committee with a calculation upon the relative incidence of taxation upon various classes of the community, and he showed that the average working-class family, receiving an average wage and consuming the average amount of taxed articles, was taxed to the extent of 1s. 7d. in the £ of their income. The hon. Member for South Islington said the lower ranks of the black-coated classes, such as the clerks, bore the heaviest burden, and these included the class who were earning between £200 and £500 a year. Although that was commonly supposed to be so, it was not the case, because they received large abatements. A man with £200 a year paid 1s. in the £, and a man with £500 paid the same amount in direct and indirect taxation together, whilst a man with £1,000 a year paid 1s. 2d., and with £5,000 1s. 0½d. On the other hand, a working-man's family with an income of £90 a year paid 1s. 7d. in the £. Therefore, the indirect taxpayer had an overwhelming claim to relief in preference to any other class, and he had still a claim to relief in the future. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must not think that those in the House who expressed the demands of the working classes would be silenced by the present relief, or that they would not continue to press the claims of those classes. The income-tax now was the same as it was in the year 1900, but the indirect taxpayer not only paid the taxes he paid then, but in addition £6,000,000 a year in taxation on sugar, £500,000 a year on tobacco, while the tea tax, after the present reduction, was still 50 per cent. more than it was before the war.

Owing to the borrowing of £9,000,000 next year under the Military and Naval Works and other Acts, in spite of the increase in the Sinking Fund the country would be still adding fresh debts faster than it would be paying off old debts. The right hon. Gentleman said not a word about extravagance. Previous Chancellors of the Exchequer had said much as to economy, but did nothing. Perhaps the present Chancellor, although he said nothing, might prove that he was able to do much. He hoped this might be the case. The hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent said the fault lay with the House of Commons in not exercising sufficient control over expenditure, and that this increased expenditure dated from the time when the closure was strictly enforced in Supply. He had no doubt this had much to do with it, but if there were a spirit of real independence among Members opposite, the time at the disposal of the House would be ample to enforce economy on the Government. He wondered how often the hon. Member for Stoke upon-Trent had voted against the Government in regard to the Estimates of the various Departments. A wave of sobriety seemed now to be spreading over the Government, and perhaps there might now be a tendency towards a death-bed repentance, although, if the present Government were returned again to power with a considerable majority, he was afraid their reckless career would recommence. If the illustration was not thought disrespectful—

> "When the devil was ill, the devil a saint would be,
> When the devil grew well, the devil a saint was he."

One of the reasons for the reduction in the tea duty, he suspected, was the imminence of dissolution. On that side of the House they welcomed in the main the way in which the surplus was disposed of, but if it heralded a dissolution they would welcome it still more.

*Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon his Budget generally, and more especially upon the fact that he had seen his way to adopt the recommendations made by the Alcohol Committee. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would recognise that the Committee had taken great care to consider the different aspects of a very difficult question. At the present time alcohol was freely used in various industries, and he believed that it would be used much more in the future. They had only to look at the enormous progress made in the use of it by Germany, France, and Switzerland in various trades in order to realise that the more extended use of alcohol in the manufactures of this country was bound to come if our manufacturers were to hold their own. It was largely used in Germany at the present moment to produce power, and heat, and light, and it was being also used for internal combustion engines. He was confident that before long the use of alcohol would supplement the use of petrol, and it would form an indigenous supply of fuel. He agreed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be well advised not to extend the use of alcohol too quickly or too widely, because it was a large source of revenue, and any tampering with it should be carefully watched. At the same time he thought that when the Report of the Committee came into the hands of Members they would see that efforts had been made to safeguard the revenue whilst affording at the same time manufacturers greater facilities in regard to it's use.

There was another point in regard to alcohol which should not be overlooked. In time of war the use of alcohol might be invaluable as an auxiliary motive force when their supply of petrol might be curtailed. At the present time petrol was largely used in submarines for naval work and motor-cars for military purposes, and it was of the greatest importance that they should have an independent source of supply. The agricultural aspect of the question should also not be overlooked. In Germany a very large number of acres were devoted to the cultivation of the potato for the production of alcohol, and this aspect of the question ought to interest hon. Members from Ireland, because there were a great many places in Ireland which could produce potatoes for this purpose which would make very good alcohol. It was also used in the manufacture of artificial silk, in the dye trade, and for varnishes, fine chemicals, and in the manufacture of smokeless powder. He was glad that the Report of the Alcohol Committee had been accepted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because it would do a great deal to enable the manufacturers of this country to compete more successfully with foreigners. He desired to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the sympathetic way in which he had received this Report, and he hoped the result would be beneficial to those manufacturers who had suffered severely from the restrictions upon the use of alcohol in the past.

*Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) said he could not join in the praises sounded from almost every part of the House in regard to the Budget statement. It was always right for nations, just as it was for individuals, to show signs of repentance for their wrong doing, but he believed there were two kinds of repentance, one genuine, and the other spurious—one that was begotten of deep conviction, and the other that was the outcome of fear. He was rather inclined to think that the statement they had heard to-day was a sort of death-bed repentance. He took the statement as the precursor of an immediate dissolution of the present Parliament. [Cries of "No!"] Some hon. Members opposite said "No," but in their case the wish was father to the thought. He desired to speak from the point of view of the indirect taxpayer. A good deal had been said by previous speakers in regard to the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in using part of the balance for the reduction of indirect taxation. That was all very well so far as it went, but when they took into consideration the amount of indebtedness of the State to the indirect taxpayer, surely, what they were to receive was only a very small return for that which had been taken from them. He would state the taxes that had been imposed on the indirect taxpayer for war purposes alone. Tea was increased by 4d. in the pound, tobacco 4d. in the pound, spirits 6d. per gallon, beer 1s. per barrel, sugar 4s. 2d. per hundredweight, export coal 1s. per ton, corn 1s. per quarter, producing a grand total of £18,123,000. That was £500,000 more than the direct taxpayer had been called upon to pay for war purposes. What were the changes that had since been made? Two years ago 4d. was taken off the income-tax, and it was very suggestive to him that the Chancellor of the Exchequer then forgot all about the individual who paid such a large amount in the shape of indirect taxation. He admitted that last year the income-tax was increased 1d., but the net result was that the income-tax had been reduced 3d., giving relief to direct taxpayers amounting to £7,500,000 off the taxes imposed for the war. As to the indirect taxpayer the only thing up till to-day attempted to be taken off was the corn duty, giving relief to the indirect taxpayer amounting to £2,500,000. He thought he was right in saying that the indirect taxpayers of this country, notwithstanding the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were still £14,000,000 per annum worse off than they were before the South African War.

He was one of those who considered the Chancellor of the Exchequer had that lost a magnificent opportunity. That opportunity was presented in two forms. In the first place he ought to have endeavoured to persuade the Government to do something to reduce the military expenditure of the country. In view of the tremendous growth of military expenditure during the past ten years, surely the time had come when an effort should be made to reduce the cost in that Department. Ten years ago the Army Estimates stood at £18,000,000, and to-day they were £29,000,000; ten years ago the expenditure on the Navy was £20,000,000, and to-day it was £41,000,000. Surely reductions ought to have been secured on these amounts, and especially in the Army Estimates. He did not think that any hon. Member would assert that we were getting value for the money we were spending on the Army to-day. The Secretary of State for War, speaking at Chelmsford recently, admitted that, notwithstanding the fact that we had doubled our Army expenditure, the Army did stand in need of mending. The hon. Member agreed with those who said that a great Army expenditure was not necessary in a country like ours. We ought to maintain an efficient Navy, but when we remembered that ten years ago our Navy expenditure was £20,000,000, and last year it was less than £41,000,000, this was an expenditure which no Government could justify. Then he found that for navy purposes France was spending £12,500,000; Russia £12,000,000; and Germany £14,000,000. These three Powers were spending £35,500,000 per annum on their navies, and surely there was a magnificent opportunity for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce our great military expenditure. Further he thought that the Government might have sought for some new sources of revenue. Last year a Bill passed its Second Reading, supported by all sections of the House, in favour of the principle of taxation of land values. That was a source of revenue which could have been taken hold of. Then there was the important question of royalties, representing large revenues, which went into private pockets. When the people realised what was proposed by the Budget he did not think the indirect taxpayers would consider that they had anything to thank the Government for. This House ought to remember there was no form of taxation that pressed so heavily upon the workers as indirect taxation. The smaller the resources of a working-class family the greater was the burden which was imposed by the taxes on such articles of daily consumption as tea, sugar, and other articles of universal use in the homes of the poor, to which he had referred. In conclusion, he regretted he could not congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his second Budget Statement, for again he would say when the whole position was examined there was little the indirect taxpayer had to thank him for.

*MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) said it appeared to him that the Budget statement partook of Liberal lines, rather than lines which commended themselves to hon. Members on his side of the House. The hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division had shown very little appreciation of this attempt to follow Liberal policy. He had termed the course which the Government were taking in this matter "a death-bed repentance," but if the life of the Government was going to be so short as the hon. Member seemed to suppose he might have rewarded their efforts by giving them absolution instead of reminding them of having done those things they ought not to have done and left undone those things they ought to have done. It was rather from the Government side of the House that a discordant note ought to have come. He could not help feeling that the fact that no relief had been given to the income-tax payer would cause great disappointment in the country. The income-tax payer, had borne the burden and heat of the day, who had some right to complain that no relief was to be afforded to him, rather than the payer of indirect taxes. The income-tax payers were not generally wealthy people, but people of comparatively small incomes—professional men, clerks, and shopkeepers—and on them the tax pressed very heavily. Although he admired the Chancellor of the Exchequer's courage and independence in passing over the income-tax payer in order to reduce debt, and had no objection in itself to the reduction of the tea duty, he hoped the income-tax payer would be next on the list.

There was great disappointment in the tobacco trade that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not announced his intention of removing altogether the differential tax on tobacco imposed last year. As a revenue tax the duty on strips was a complete failure. It had brought in the estimated revenue this year because, there were large stocks in bond, which could not be released until the duty was paid. But the import of strips had almost entirely ceased, only that which had already been contracted for, or that required for use in bond, having come in. The trade in stripped tobacco was killed, and, therefore, no revenue would accrue from the tax in future. The tax, it was true, had introduced a certain amount of employment in this country in stripping tobacco, but that employment was of a spurious character. It was not really required, for the tobacco could be much better dealt with on the other side of the Atlantic. Referring to the stamp duties, he wished once more to voice the opinion of the marine insurance community that the time had come when something should be done to reduce the stamp duties on marine insurance. The stamp duty on fire insurance was 1d. for any amount, whereas for marine insurance it was 3d. or 6d. per cent. That was felt to be a heavy burden by underwriters, and they hoped that something would be done before long to reduce it.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his fair-minded statement dwelt to a considerable extent on various items of income which he expected to come into the Exchequer during the year 1905–6; but hon. Members could not but have noticed the lamentable absence on the right hon. Gentleman's part of any serious attention to the alarming growth of national expenditure, or of one single word of protest against the enormous growth in the expenditure for the naval and military services. Now, the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor the right hon. Member for West Bristol had told the Committee in one of his speeches that no one outside the War Office believed that the country got value for its money in Army expenditure, and he thought it was possible to have a reduction in that expenditure with increased efficiency. What was the position they were face to face with? Not much more than a quarter of a century ago, when the finances of the country were in the hands of a financial expert, the expenditure, all told, was £71,500,000, and to-day, in a time of peace, it was twice that amount, or £142,000,000. In addition to that, however, there were the expenditure upon naval and military works, the amounts given to Ireland, and the contributions to local taxation; and national expenditure now reached £160,000,000. Last year there was an increase of £10,500,000 which was reduced this year by £1,500,000, and the reduction for the coming year was something under a £1,000,000. Therefore the expenditure for the year 1905–6 was nearly £10,000,000 greater than that in 1902–3. He meant normal expenditure. The burden of this upon a country was almost incalculable, so far as its commercial prosperity was concerned. A large proportion of it was unproductive and restricted the buying power of the people who had, compared with the last ten years, £50,000,000 less wherewith to buy everything they needed—food, clothes, and the furnishing of their homes. That meant that fewer orders were given to manufacturers producing for the home market, and a large increase in the number of the unemployed.

This alarming increase in the national expenditure required a much more serious consideration from the Committee than it had yet received. For two years past economists on both sides of the House had declared that a day ought to be given to the House to consider the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, but that day had not been allocated. That Committee had recommended that, as the national expenditure was divided into four classes, one class should be taken each year and independently examined with the view of securing a possibly considerable curtailment of expenditure in each particular class; but that recommendation had been entirely disregarded by the Government. They had been told the other day that it was too late to discuss properly national expenditure with the view of securing a reduction of it on the Budget, and that these discussions ought to take place on the Estimates. Further, they had been told that it was the neglect of the House to criticise the Estimates which caused the expenditure of the country to be greater than it otherwise might have been. But how could they discuss the Estimates when these were closured night after night, and millions were voted away without many of the Votes having been considered in the slightest degree by the House of Commons? They must conclude, therefore, that the Government were not serious, and that they did not realise the unbearable burden which this huge and inflated national expenditure laid upon the country.

Reference had been made to the comparison between direct and indirect taxation. When the South African War was proceeding taxation was imposed in equal amount on the direct and indirect taxpayers; but when, in 1903–4, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had ten and a half millions of a surplus, instead of remitting with it half the burden on direct and half on indirect taxpayers, he remitted four-fifths in relief of the direct taxpayers, and only one-fifth in relief of the indirect taxpayers. He congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on having in his remission of taxation this year dealt much more equitably with the general body of taxpayers in the country, though there was still due to the indirect taxpayers the disproportion in the relief given in 1903–4. In 1903–4 the direct taxpayers were relieved of 4d. in the £ in income-tax, while the indirect taxpayers were only relieved to the extent of 1d. in the shape of the removal of the corn duty. As regarded the income-tax further opportunity would occur of discussing that important question—whether there ought not to be a graduated income-tax, and a differential income-tax charged on those who earned their income by their own exertions, and those who were in the enjoyment of incomes from investments, especially if they had inherited them.

What was the position in regard to the war taxes? They had still the war tax of 2d. per lb. on tea, still the sugar tax, and the coal tax. In regard to the coal tax, the Chancellor of the Exchequer told the Committee that the exports of coal were greater this year, so far as they had gone, than they had ever been before; and that therefore the coal tax could not be having an injurious effect on the coal trade. But what were the actual facts? Those engaged in the coal trade—coalowners, coal miners, and coal shippers—not only had to pay the other taxes levied on the community, but £2,000,000 a year in addition. No corresponding tax was imposed on any other great industry in the country; and he maintained that that was a flagrant injustice which ought to be remedied, and that there ought to be equality in the incidence of taxation.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, he believed, thought that the coal trade was not injured by this tax; but, nevertheless, it was a tax which specially affected all coal exported from Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire. They received in consequence of the coal duty on export coal 1s. per ton less at the pit's mouth. That had naturally decreased the wages of the miners, and the continuance of this serious burden might result in the shutting down of many collieries and injury to the coal trade of this country from which not less than 4,000,000 of people derived their livelihood. He considered that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give, even in connection with this Budget, his serious consideration as to whether, by some means or other, provision could not be made for the abolition of this most unjust coal tax. There was a general view that if the Government reduced the number of the Regular Army, and the enormous expenditure on the Navy, and doubled the amount hitherto devoted to securing the efficiency of the Volunteers and Auxiliary Forces, the defensive power of the country would be greater, and the direct burden on the taxpayers would be substantially less.

He would, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give him his attention for one moment. He had been pointing out that they had had no word of protest from the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, against the enormous increase in the expenditure on the Army and Navy.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I said what I had to say on that subject on another occasion. I think it is futile and idle to talk of reducing expenditure which I believe to be necessary for the security of the country.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said he was glad to have drawn that statement from the right hon. Gentleman; but they had been promised last year by the Secretary for War that there would be large reductions in the Army expenditure.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Not for this year.

Mr. Joseph Walton.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said he was not aware that the Secretary for War had excluded this year.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, he did. Perhaps the hon. Member will take it from me that he did.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said he certainly accepted the right hon. Gentleman's statement that he understood the Secretary for War to exclude this year; but they were face to face with the fact that ten years ago the expenditure on the Army and Navy was only £35,000,000, whereas this year the expenditure on these services was £63,000,000, and in addition to that, there was an expenditure of £9,000,000 on naval and military works, or a total of £72,000,000. And what had they got in return for this enormously increased expenditure? An Army practically without efficient artillery, and with a rifle the merits of which were still under discussion. The fact was, we were in a state of chaos in regard to our Army; and he did think that the guardian of the public purse, even if he thought it would be futile, should have seriously protested against this enormous growth of expenditure on the Army and Navy. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had, when that right hon. Gentleman was Chancellor of the Exchequer, uttered a warning as to the necessity for substantially reducing the expenditure on those services.

The National Debt was in a most unsatisfactory position. On the one hand, the right hon. Gentleman had taken a step in the right direction by increasing the amount allocated to the reduction of the National Debt from £27,000,000 to £28,000,000; but he was going to borrow £9,000,000 for naval and military works, and therefore there was no reduction in the national expenditure. The fact was there was urgent need to criticise the whole financial situation of the country, not only in regard to Imperial, but also in regard to local expenditure. What was required was a national balance-sheet which would show where we stood. The national aggregate indebtedness amounted to £1,500,000,000, including local debts and debt for South Africa, and that in connection with the Land Act in Ireland. It was perfectly true that, as regarded local indebtedness, a great deal of it had been expended on tramways, electric lighting, waterworks, etc., which were revenue-producing undertakings; but still the fact ought not to be overlooked that the people had to pay very heavy local rates. Take the case of London. A working man had to pay for a very indifferent home a rent of 7s. 6d. per week, and that, with rates, was equal to 10 per cent. of his earnings, putting these at 25s. per week. In additional to that he had to pay another 10 per cent. of his earnings in Imperial taxation. When the question of taxation was considered from that standpoint it became a matter of life and death; so far as the working classes were concerned it meant the difference between being hard driven to secure necessary food and clothing, and living in comparative comfort. Hon. Members professed a desire to raise the standard of living among the people; they ought to begin in a practical way by grappling with this inflated national expenditure in a manner not yet attempted. It was only by facing the whole facts of the situation and realising how seriously the prosperity of the country was being crippled and hindered that they would ever get this expenditure brought within reasonable limits.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had attributed the falling off in Customs largely to a change in the habits of the people. He knew of no more certain barometer as to the condition of trade than the yield of Customs and Excise. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer took a low estimate for the yield in view of the fact that both he and his predecessors had been disappointed in previous years, but in spite of that low estimate the yield was £1,250,000 less than he budgeted for. That pointed unmistakably to the fact that taxation was unduly heavy and was more than the people could bear, and that they were not able to consume the amount of commodities they would have consumed if taxation had been lower. That was a serious aspect of the taxation necessitated by the enormous increase in our expenditure, and the explanation that it was to be accounted for by a change in the habits of the people would not bear a minute's investigation. The right hon. Gentleman forgot that the people who contributed the largest proportion of the revenue were those who were in receipt of weekly wages, who had just so much to spend and no more, and if by taxation or any other cause the price of the commodity was advanced they had to satisfy themselves with less or with an article of inferior quality. He hoped nobody supposed that the Budget indicated that trade was reviving. There would be no real revival in trade until there was diminished national expenditure followed as a consequence by diminished taxation.

With regard to the tea duty he would be glad to see it restored to the figure at which it stood last year, and nobody would be more pleased than those who were engaged in planting in Ceylon and India. He was rather inclined to think that the right hon. Gentleman had made his concession not so much in the interests of the English consumer as in consequence of the strongest possible representations having been made to him by the Governments of India and Ceylon as to the detrimental effect which the unduly high taxation had had upon the industry. He knew of no trade that would stand this perpetual interference, that had become almost chronic in respect to the tea trade. Successive Chancellors of the Exchequer in the last five years had made this trade a sort of happy hunting ground when in search of revenue. There had been no less than three alterations in five years, and these constant changes involved an enormous loss to the trade. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman or his successors would bear in mind that this interference was most detrimental to trade. The right hon. Gentleman had arranged that the remission of duty should not take place until the 1st July. Had the right hon. Gentleman considered the effect of that upon the Exchequer? He warned the right hon. Gentleman that the receipts would be very small from now to July, and at the same time it would paralyse the wholesale trade, which would practically come to a standstill, as all orders would be given for delivery on July 1st. It would have been far better to have adopted the old plan of making the remission come into force the very next day after the announcement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It would be well if the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to collect the opinion of the trade as to whether it would not be more beneficial—it would certainly be more beneficial to the right hon. Gentleman to allow the remission to become operative before July 1st. He would also suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should allow the preparation of tea for the wholesale trade to go on under bond in the bonded warehouses, otherwise, when July 1st came, there would be such a rush to pay duty that trade would be entirely dislocated.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have to express my thanks to the Committee for the way in which they have received the Budget statement and the proposals I have made. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was good enough to felicitate me for the brevity of that statement, which I believe makes "a record" even over my own performance of last year. I will endeavour not to spoil that by speaking at too great length in reply to the observations which have been made, but I owe the Committee some explanations in regard to various points which have been raised. I am glad to recognise that on all sides of the House there has been a recognition of the fact that it is our duty to take early measures to reduce the burden of the Debt, and upon the present occasion ourselves to make the necessary sacrifices for that purpose, and not leave them wholly to be borne by those who come after us. Indeed, the only criticism that has been offered is that I have not gone far enough. I rather suspect that if I had devoted more money to the same purpose—if, for instance, I had declined to propose any reduction of taxation at all, and used the whole of the surplus for the reduction of the Debt—I should only have been placing in the way of my successor a temptation which, human nature and, above all, politicians' human nature, being what it is, he would have been unable to resist. I think that my proposal, sufficiently large in itself, is yet of such a character that it may withstand temptations of that kind, and will not easily be open to attack by others who may feel less deeply than I do the necessity for a reduction in our outstanding liabilities. To those who think that the provision I have made is insufficient, I would venture to say one word. After all, the Sinking Fund should be judged not merely by its actual amount, though that is larger under my proposal than ever before, but by what proportion it bears to the Debt existing at the time. Judged by that standard how does my proposal appear? If hon. Members will look back over a course of years they will see that the Sinking Fund reached its heyday in 1898–99, and with the addition which I now propose it will again stand at almost as high a point. This is not a bad account to give of ourselves; and I trust that others outside will feel the same satisfaction which has been expressed in the Committee at seeing the Government take this early opportunity of increasing the provision which we are making for the repayment of the Debt.

The Member for East Edinburgh has suggested that it was my duty to take advantage of the falling in of certain terminable annuities next year, and to apply them in the way in which other terminable annuities were applied in earlier years, in anticipation of their expiration. I am not certain that the hon. Member appreciates what would be the result of that operation. It is, of course, perfectly open to me or to my successor next year to deal with the annuities which fall in as may seem best to him at the time; and if an operation of that kind was the one which most approved itself to the Committee next year, there is no obstacle whatever raised in his path by what I have now done. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would next year be free to carry out such an operation, and why should I anticipate his decision at that time? I think there is every reason to wait for a little further experience before we decide exactly how we shall apply the money which thus becomes available. The only thing I will say for myself, and for anyone who holds my position, is that the money, however it might be applied, must be applied to one object, and one object only—namely, the reduction of the Debt. The mere creation of new terminable annuities will not apply a penny more to the reduction of the Debt than the application of the same money in other ways, if other ways prove desirable. It is not a question, therefore, as might have been assumed by anyone listening to the hon. Gentleman, between applying more money or less money to the reduction of debt. It is merely a question of how we apply the money which is available; and, unlike the hon. Gentleman, I prefer not to anticipate the discretion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer next year, but to leave it to him to decide in the light of the information then available to him whether he will apply it in the way which at present seems to me most useful for the purpose, or whether he will set up fresh terminable annuities such as the hon. Gentleman suggests.

The hon. Member for East Perthshire has asked me one or two Questions, some of which I replied to in the course of my speech, and I think he will find the answer if he will be good enough to look at the report of what I said this afternoon. He asked me, as I had stated that I hoped not to be obliged to have recourse to the market for fresh borrowings on account of expenditure charged to capital account in the course of the present calendar year, how I proposed to provide for the expenditure which I myself had admitted must be met on that account. I hope that within the present calendar year the resources at the disposal of the National Debt Commissioners will be sufficient for all our purposes without any recourse to borrowings on the open market. The hon. Member further asked me why I propose to issue the new bonds at once. The question of the date of issue of any new security is a matter which must always exercise the careful consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in choosing the time for the issue he must be guided by the conditions of the market and by the prospects of better results or less good results by delaying his appeal. In the present case I think an earlier appeal to the market will be most likely to secure the most favourable terms for the nation. But there is another reason, as I have explained, why I desire to raise the money at an early date. Under ordinary circumstances we have to borrow largely upon Treasury Bills in the early months of the year, these Treasury Bills being repaid in the last quarter of the year. If the House approves, as I doubt not, after the debate of to-day, it will approve, of the early issue of these bonds then I shall be able to restrict these early borrowings on Treasury Bills, and shall have the use of the money arising from the new bonds until the time comes when, in the month of December, I have to pay off the now outstanding Exchequer bonds. I think those are the principal questions put to me in the course of this discussion.

There were some points touched upon by hon. Gentlemen on the other side, who, I think expressed their intention of taking a later opportunity of developing them more fully, an opportunity such as would be afforded on the other Resolutions or upon the Budget itself. I hope they will excuse me from replying to them in detail on the present occasion. I will reserve what I have to say until we can discuss the matter more fully. But I will make a few observations on the remarks which have fallen from the hon. Member for Islington and the Member for Devonport. The hon. Member for Islington has recognised very kindly an effort I have made to meet a case put to me by a deputation which he introduced and which seemed to me on its merits a good case, which had only escaped attention hitherto because it was a small matter and those affected were few in number. I think a case of that kind deserved consideration when I had the opportunity to give relief by waiving charges of little advantage to the Exchequer and of great annoyance to trade; but on other matters I am afraid he and I are less in sympathy. He alluded to the wine duties, and, as I understood him, attributed the falling revenue wholly to the lack of a lower duty upon the wines of lesser alcoholic strength.

Mr. LOUGH: The increase of duty about four years ago.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Well, I differ from the hon. Member. I see the fall in revenue derived from this source with great regret. With double regret I observe that the decline in the importation of wine has affected in equal measure the imports from our own British possessions. There may come, there will come, a time when we shall be enabled to deal with this matter in other ways, and when I hope we may cultivate this trade with our Colonies more than we have hitherto done. The present decline, affecting, as it does, all classes of wine, is not due to the rate of the tax, but to the lessened purchasing power of those who consume it.

Mr. LOUGH: What is that due to?

****Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN**: It is due to bad trade in the last few years. The hon. Gentleman went on to allude to certain proceedings in connection with the income-tax of this year, and, if I am correctly informed, to a particular case where he suggested an unfortunate man had been driven to suicide by the pressure brought to bear upon him by the authorities.

Mr. LOUGH: The coroner's jury reported. I have a cutting from a newspaper and was asked to put a Question upon it; but I hesitated to do so, preferring rather to leave the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with it.

****Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN**: The hon. Member must not always trust to cuttings from newspapers. If he had come to me for information on the subject, I think I should have been able to convince him that there was no truth whatever in this story. The final notice had not been served on the man, and the newspaper cutting on which the hon. Member relied led to an angry visit to the collector from a neighbour, who said that to her knowledge the man had not been served with his final notice, as she had been, and who founded on this a complaint that taxpayers were unequally treated, and that he had been let off more easily than others.

I pause now to answer the hon. Member for Devonport, who also dealt with the tea duty. I listened with interest to his remarks. I gather that the hon. Member would have preferred that I should have left the tea tax at the present rate. Instead of expressing satisfaction at the relief which it is in our power to give to the consumer of tea, he had no sympathy for the tea consumer or tea producer, but only had a lamentable tale of woe on behalf of the tea dealer, who would have to make out new price lists and issue new circulars to his customers.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

Mr. KEARLEY said that was a gross exaggeration of what he had said. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he realised what would be the effect of delaying this concession of duty until July 1st. He pointed out that it would have a very demoralising effect on the trade, and that all orders would be held up for delivery until after that date.

****Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN**: The hon. Member is now referring to another portion of his speech on which I have not yet commented; but he also complained that the tea duties have received too much attention from Chancellors of the Exchequer, and he asks me if I realise the trouble and inconvenience to the trade.

Mr. KEARLEY: Three times in five years.

****Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN**: Yes, the duty has been altered three times in five years, and the third time is the reduction which I have proposed to-day. I think the hon. Gentleman should think a little about the producer and the consumer and should not be wholly occupied with the interests of the dealer.

Mr. KEARLEY said that was a very unfair observation. He pointed out for the information of the right hon. Gentleman, should he be Chancellor of the Exchequer next year, that it would be well to bear in mind that these frequent alterations in the duty affecting one particular trade were very onerous, costly, and burdensome.

He contended that was a most fair observation and ought not to subject him to the kind of hostile criticism he had received from the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not differ from that statement of the hon. Gentleman. Any change of duty is an inconvenience to the trade concerned. What I venture to suggest is that there are other considerations which must also be taken into account besides the interests of those who dealt in the dutiable article. Certainly I, and no doubt any other Chancellor of the Exchequer who succeeds me, will bear in mind the reluctance of the hon. Gentleman to receive any further alteration in the tea duty. The hon. Gentleman also calls my attention to the particular conditions surrounding the repeal of the extra twopence of duty which I have proposed in the present year. I have very carefully considered this matter, and, if he will pardon my saying so—my practical experience of the trade being much less than his—I think the hon. Gentleman somewhat overrates the difficulty in which the trade may be put. I am certain that if I had proposed to repeal the duty from to-morrow there would have been an outcry from every man who held duty-paid stock at the present time. I must, in common fairness, give to traders with duty-paid stocks a reasonable time for clearing those stocks; and, whatever time be fixed, it is clear that during the last few weeks the higher duty is in force duty-paid stocks will in every case be reduced to a minimum. I do not, I confess, understand why it should cause more inconvenience, provided traders know the date on which the duty will be reduced, than it would if it took effect a month or six weeks earlier.

There is another side of this matter to which I must beg the attention of the Committee, and which is of real importance. In recent years every trade in a dutiable article has become extraordinarily sensitive about Budget time. Whenever there is an expectation of an increase in the duty there is great forestalment of clearings. This is a thing we cannot provide against, but it has a disturbing influence on the proportion of the revenue between the two years. And, equally, if any reduction of duty is anticipated, there is apt to be a similar disturbance, since dutiable goods are held back in an abnormal way; and if the trades affected get to understand that a remission of duty will take place immediately after the Budget, which is brought in as near as possible to the beginning of the financial year, the result may be that the revenue of the preceding year would be very seriously upset, and actually it may amount to this, that remissions which under the normal payment of duty would be possible may be rendered impossible. If hon. Gentlemen will consider these matters, they will see that, apart from questions affecting the trade, there is a very serious question affecting the revenue to which for the time being, as guardian of our national finances, I feel I must attach great weight. I believe that if I had not published a letter in answer to a correspondent, in which I pointed out that the tea duty was enacted by Parliament until July 1st, and if I had not expressed my own intention—and my belief that any who followed me would pursue the same course—not to remit such a duty before that date under any circumstances, I do not know whether the surplus of last year would have been turned into a deficit; but I am quite certain that the anticipations of my last year's Budget would have been still further disturbed, and we should not have had the balance at the end of the year on which we are able to congratulate ourselves on this occasion. I admit that there would have been in past times much greater inconvenience in my proposal in the special circumstances of the tea trade than exist to-day.

I do not think the hon. Member for Devonport quite understood the scope of the concession which I made last year in regard to blending in bonded warehouses. Owing to changes in the tea trade which I need not describe, it has become necessary for traders to have a larger stock available for handling than was formerly the case; but I believe I have fairly met all reasonable claims that could be made in that respect by the concession I made last year, and that wholesale dealers will find no difficulty in preparing for the great demand, which will undoubtedly arise immediately the lower duty comes into force, under the new conditions which I extended to their trade last year. The hon. Member for Devonport said that in proposing this reduction on tea the Government were more influenced by representations from the Indian and Ceylon Governments than by regard for the consumer. I am not ashamed to say that I attached great weight to the representations of the Indian and Ceylon Governments on this subject. As I said earlier in the day, I chose tea last year as an article of increased taxation with avowed reluctance. Again and again I admitted that I had merely chosen it as the lesser evil. In the discussion it was stated that it was improbable that any portion of the duty would be paid by the foreigner. I do not think it has been paid by the foreigner; but some portion of it has fallen on our fellow-subjects in India and Ceylon; and if they, too, with the consumer receive relief under the proposal I am making, this is not to my mind a subject for regret, but an additional reason for making that proposal.

I have attempted in the discussion to-day to avoid anything of a controversial character. I suppose we may, perhaps, come to that later, though I am hopeful that, having regard to the general approval which has been expressed of the Budget proposals, there will not be so much of it as there has been in some previous years.

MR. LOUGH asked when the small changes with regard to the reduction of the $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. would come into operation.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: These changes cannot come into operation until the Finance Act passes. I appeal to the Committee, as they have treated the Budget statement on the whole in a non-controversial spirit, to allow a decision to be now taken on the first Resolution. I understand that by agreement between the two sides of the House, following a discussion between the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, the other annual Resolutions—the merely repeating Resolutions—are to be taken to-night, and the serious Resolutions taken later—the tea duty on Tuesday and the income-tax on Wednesday, and that on the tea duty Resolution to-morrow, with your permission, Sir, a general discussion will be again allowed if hon. Gentlemen desire. In the circumstances I think I should only be wasting the time of the Committee if at this period I attempted to take up the time of the Committee further by entering into more detail with regard to these proposals. I thank them for the kindness they have shown to me, and I make this appeal for a still further exercise of their indulgence.

*Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he took it this probably was the most important Resolution they could pass. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not given the House any idea as to what would take place with regard to the expenditure of the future. He did not give any hope of reducing expenses or of enlarging the area of taxation. As an Irish Member he thought they were entitled to some expression from the right hon. Gentleman with respect to the over-taxation of Ireland, which had been steadily increased since the verdict of the Financial Relations Committee declared they were over-taxed by £2,750,000 sterling per annum—this increase to almost £4,000,000 sterling was mainly the result of the Boer War. They were all aware that the Transvaal War was practically a Stock Exchange War. It was manipulated by financiers and gamblers, in options, shares, and warrants. To protect the public, in his opinion, all such gambling, especially in respect to metals, commodities and food stuffs, should be prohibited, or at least controlled, as they were in other more sensibly governed countries, where financiers had not such influence in operating the Government. The House understood that these mineowners were to provide £30,000,000, and, as none of this had been paid, and as no definite promise had been made, before the Budget was introduced he asked whether a reasonable import duty would be imposed on diamonds. The right hon. Gentleman said the secrets of the Budget were regarded as sacred, and he could not give him any information. He wanted the information now. He thought it was reasonable that such a duty should be put on diamonds imported into the three Kingdoms by those who engineered the country into an expensive war.

Another subject the right hon. Gentleman had passed over which demanded attention was that of land values. Parliament had expressed its opinion very clearly on this question, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have carried out its behest. This was not a good but a very commonplace Budget. There was nothing original about it. The right hon. Gentleman was afraid to venture into new regions. There ought to be a tax on motor-cars, which were undoubtedly, like diamonds, a luxury, and were owned by people who could afford to pay. The House had lost nearly all control over the taxes; the power over the public purse had to a large extent passed from private Members. When passing Supply the closure was applied, and the result was that democratic Members had limited opportunity of criticising the Estimates. This country was not paying its way. Their expenditure had swelled to an enormous degree, over-taxation was undoubtedly lessening the power of purchase on the part of the workers; and, the present system should be superseded by one of greater economy and more efficiency. These great questions of National Taxation were practically managed by the permanent officials. They had the same indigested kind of finance annually put forward as the bill of fare for the House to swallow whether they had an appetite for it or not. He was glad the tax on tea had been reduced, but an effort ought to be made to endeavour to further reduce the indirect taxation, and obtain more taxes from those better able to pay it than the working classes. They who represented a democratic community were entitled to be heard in this matter, because Ireland was over-taxed against the expressed terms of the Unions and above her taxable capacity; now they had to pay expenses of a war of which they disapproved, and from which they received no benefit. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider the points he had raised. He reminded him that in olden times all the taxation of the country came from the land. Then it was shifted to the consumer, and now they had got into a more complex system, they ought to have half of the taxation direct and half indirect, the tremendous revenues derivable from royalties should be taxed. He trusted that the House would, in future, take more interest in these Budgets, because the finances of the country was one of the principal things they had to consider; but, unfortunately, the House had almost lost the power of criticism regarding fiscal arrangements upon which the prosperity and progress of the community so largely depended.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he wanted to be clear about their position with regard to the Resolutions of to-morrow and Wednesday. He understood that the arrangement was that they should be allowed to discuss the Budget as a whole with the Resolution of to-morrow, which would be tea, and that on Wednesday the income-tax Resolution would be discussed. The Member for East Edinburgh some time ago asked the right hon. Gentleman to lay on the table a Return showing for various years the collection of the income-tax in various parts of the Kingdom. This had connection with a point the right hon. Gentleman raised in his Budget speech as to the extra collection which had taken place this year. He believed this Return had been laid, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman could say whether it would be in the hands of hon. Members by Wednesday.

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he understood that the arrangements made were that they should have the tea duty first to-morrow, and that on the tea duty, with the Chairman's permission, they should continue the general discussion if hon. Gentlemen so desired; that on Wednesday they should take the Income-tax Resolution, and that to-night they should take the other annual Resolutions unchallenged.

Mr. FIELD: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the suggestions that I have made to him?

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will excuse me from saying more at the present moment than that I think there is not one of the suggestions he has made to which I have not given careful consideration.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): Is there any reason why the right hon. Gentleman should take the other Resolutions to-night?

*Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, if we are to finish the Resolutions in Committee stage by Wednesday. It is an arrangement made between the two sides. I am sure the hon. Gentleman does not intend to question any arrangement of that kind. The arrangement was that we should finish this stage of the Budget Resolutions by Wednesday, and that for the convenience of the House the tea duty should be the first for discussion to-morrow, that the Income-tax Resolution should be the first on Wednesday, and that we should take the other Resolutions, which are the annual Resolutions, unchallenged. As regards the particular Return, I cannot say definitely that it will be in the hands of hon. Members on Wednesday, but I will get the figures by that time. I am not quite certain whether the figures are actually ascertained yet; I rather think the Return is in the hands of the printer.

MR. McCRAE: The Return was laid about ten days ago, and I think it is important for Wednesday's debate that we should have the figures.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I will give them to the Committee if I can. Of course, the Return being laid does not mean the Return is prepared.

MR. McKENNA: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the arrangement goes beyond having all the Resolutions completed in Committee by Wednesday next.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am informed by my right hon. friend that the agreement was that all Resolutions in Committee stage should be finished by Wednesday and that the Resolutions, with the exception of those of the tea duty and the income-tax, should be concluded to-night.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he wanted to say a word or two before they passed the Resolution before them. First of all, he would like to refer to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement respecting the reduction of receipts for intoxicants consumed in this country. As a representative of workmen he could assure him that no one was better pleased than they were, and they hoped and believed that the reasons he had given for this reduction were genuine, that it was due to a change in the habits of the people. Some of them could remember the time when holidays were spent among roundabouts and that sort of thing, and they were pleased to know people could now get away to the seaside, taking advantage of the excursions; and he believed that it was in this direction, as mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, that they were now spending more money. He would like to suggest to him that the Government might do something to assist this, if it read and digested some of the recommendations of the Committee on Physical Deterioration. One or two of these recommendations were of particular interest; and, if the Government could adopt them, he was sure they would help further in the decrease in the consumption of intoxicants in the country. They had nothing but praise for the reduction of the duty on tea, but it should not be understood that the Budget was a satisfactory one to the labouring classes. It was nothing of the kind. They quite admitted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was carrying out the financial arrangements of all previous Chancellors of the Exchequer and had done the best he could, but there was no reason why he should not have instituted some new mode of raising money. There were such things as copying graduation, as they had it in the death duties. Why should not the same principle be adopted with regard to the income-tax? He was quite amused to notice how careful and considerate hon. Members were about the commercial classes and their income-tax. Surely, they realised that there was a net income of £160, and that taxation in those cases left 19s. in the £. But when they came to the working man earning 18s., £1, and 22s. a week, there was no £160, and the tax came clean out of the income. It was a very heavy tax. What they wanted to see was that those who could pay, those who had £160 and more, should be taxed to the relief of the indirect taxpayer.

Then he held that there was absolutely no need for the present great expenditure. They must prove first of all that their expenditure was justifiable before they could say the people were not entitled to some reduction. Surely discussions in the House during the past three or four weeks on Army questions revealed to the whole nation that we were not getting value for our money, and that, if we were, there would be considerably less expenditure for the same troops and for the armament of them. He knew it was very unpopular to say a word against expenditure on the Navy, but they had such men as the Member for Exeter saying, as he said last year, that the two-Power standard could be maintained with £9,000,000 less expenditure, and this had never been replied to, and they were entitled to have some consideration given to statements of this kind and to have something shown for the additional £9,000,000 which he said were unnecessary to maintain that standard. He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reply to the statement as to the proportionment of taxation paid by the various classes in the country. It was a subject that wanted going into. If it were true that a working man with an average wage of 33s. per week was paying 1s. 7d. in the £, it was considerably more when they came to the labourer with 18s, £1, and 25s. per week. When it was said that the commercial classes were paying 1s. in the £, it should not be understood that they were paying more than their share; in his opinion they were paying less in proportion to their ability to pay.

Question put, and agreed to.

1. Resolved, "That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under the Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding £10,000,000 be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new Sinking Fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be £28,000,000. That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principal of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of The Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by section 5 of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Committee divided: Ayes, 175; Noes, 106. (Division List No. 129.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brigg, John
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. H. M (Dublin, Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Ed. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nde'ry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords. N. W.)
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H. (Somers't, E
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon Arthur Fred.
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N. R
Lee, A. H. (Hants, Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hn. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, R. J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh'e
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. W. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shackleton, David James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt. Hn J. Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. C Sir E. H (Sheffield
Welby, Lt. Col A. C. E (Taunton
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne)
Whitmore, Chas. Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, John Williams
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Elibank, Master of
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Higham, John Sharpe
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, P. J.(Westmeath,N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, Arthur W. (N. Dorset)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Mooney and Mr. Joyce.

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by Sections 6 and 7 of The Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July nineteen hundred and six."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Committee divided: Ayes, 171; Noes, 97. (Division List No. 130.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn A J (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald (Leeds, W
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brigg, John
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A. (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B. (Inv'rn'ssB'hs
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh

Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords, N.W
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse,RtHnH.(Somers't E.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys,Rt.Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire)
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hn. Frederick W.
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks. N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants, Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H.(Dumfriessh.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moore, William
Morgan David J.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt. Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Shackleton, David James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, AbelH.(Hertford,East)
Smith,RtHnJ.Parker(Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt.Hon.Lord(Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J.M'Taggart
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, ColSirC.E.H(Sheffield
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
White, Luke, York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H.Ashton-und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, A.Stanley(York.,E.R.)
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burke, E. Haviland
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsayGalway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Higham, John Sharpe
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E,)
Hutchinson, Dr.CharlesFredk.
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, P. J.(Westmeath,N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P. (CavanW
Law, HughAlex(Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S,)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon,N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney

Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N Dorset
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Hudd'rsfi'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Duffy and Mr. Joyce.

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

Resolved, "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that many hon. Members had remained in the belief that the Army Annual Bill was to be taken that evening. He thought that when the Government had changed their mind as to the arrangement of the business at the Evening Sitting information should be given to the House. He asked when the Government proposed to take the Army Annual Bill.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said that there was a general understanding that the Army Annual Bill would be taken that night, and it was on that ground that arrangements had been made to discuss it. He did not suggest for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman had done anything to defeat those on that side of the House in their arrangements.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington) said that as the Divisions on the Chancellor's Resolution went on till twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, and as it was agreed that the debate on the Army Annual Bill would go on for a considerable time, he thought it would be more convenient to take it on Wednesday at twelve midnight.

Mr. DALZIEL: Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that the Government are going to be on those benches at twelve midnight on Wednesday?

POWER BRAKES ON RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES.

Return ordered, in the following form—

Railway Company.	Total Number.		Total number used exclusively for shunting purposes.		Number fitted with Power Brakes.	
	Engines.	Tenders.	Engines.	Tenders.	Engines.	Tenders.

—(*Mr. Bell.*)

Adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 11th April, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :— Worcestershire County Council Bridges.

And that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with : — Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) ; Chelsea Electricity Supply ; Epping Gas ; Great Eastern Railway ; Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water ; Loughborough Corporation ; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society ; Weybridge and Walton-upon-Thames Electric Supply ; Darien Gold Mining Company [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified ; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Brompton, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester Water Bill ; East Cowes Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage Bill [H.L.] ; Sheffield University Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Walker and Wallsend Union Gas Bill ; Southampton and Winchester Great Western Junction Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.] ; East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill [H.L.] ; Charing Cross and Strand Electricity Supply Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; City of London Electric Lighting Company Bill [H.L.] ; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.] ; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Various Powers) Bill [H.L.] ; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.] ; Central Electric Supply Bill [H.L.] ; County of London Electric Supply Company Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again till Tuesday the 9th of May next.

Morley Corporation Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed.

Preston Corporation (Ribble Navigation) Bill [H.L.] ; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Acton Sewage Bill ; Birmingham Corporation Bill ; Brentwood Gas Bill ; Great Berkhampstead Gas Bill ; Great Northern Railway Bill ; Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill ; London Gas Bill ; Nottingham and Retford Railway Bill ; Otley Improvement Bill ; Seaham Gas Bill ; Sunderland and South Shields Water Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1^a ; and referred to the Examiners.

Abertillery Urban District Water Bill [H.L.] ; Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [H.L.] ; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.] ; Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.] ; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [H.L.] ; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.] ; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.] ; Formby Township Bill [H.L.] ; Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Monk Bretton be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Clements (*E. Leitrim*) ; read, and agreed to.

PETITIONS.

STREET BETTING BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour of ; of residents in Nottingham ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Petitions in favour of; of Lodges of Good Templars (2); residents of Gloucester and Cheltenham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.

No. 446. St. Vincent (Report for 1903–1904). Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to James Smith, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.

Annual account of receipts and payments in respect of the capital and income of the above fund, for the period to 31st December, 1904.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY.

Return respecting. Laid before the House (pursuant to Address of the 31st of March last), and to be printed. (No. 45.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being suspended for that day's sitting.

COLONIES (PROPOSED COLONIAL CONFERENCE).

***Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH** rose to call attention to the declarations of certain of His Majesty's Ministers concerning the proposed Colonial Conference, and to move to resolve "That in the opinion of this House it is necessary that before the constituencies of the country are asked to determine upon the desirability of such conference they should be informed (1) under what conditions the conference will be summoned; (2) what Colonies and Dependencies will be invited to send representatives; and (3) how far any decision arrived at will be held as binding upon His Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom."

He said: My Lords, I do not think I need offer to your Lordships any apology for calling your attention to the subject to which the Motion which stands in my name refers, because I think I can find ample justification for the course I am taking in the importance of the subject itself, in the doubt which enshrouds the special aspect of it which is more particularly the subject of my Motion, and, in my humble opinion, the public interest imposes on the Government the absolute duty of clearing away doubts which I think I shall show to your Lordships exist at the present time. I thought I had cast the form of my Motion in a way as little objectionable as it could possibly be put. It seems to me as it stands that it is a proposition so absolutely self-evident that I can hardly understand anybody taking a contrary view. At any rate, if it is the case that at a general election, whenever that event takes place, the constituencies of this country are to be appealed to on this momentous subject, then it does seem to me they ought only to be appealed to with the light of the fullest and most complete information possible; and, my Lords, the only hope of taking colonial questions out of the arena of our domestic controversies is, in the case of them, to be absolutely distinct and clear in the policy which is to be enunciated. I do not like questions affecting either colonial or foreign policy to be made the subject of domestic controversy in this country, and I think I can say that neither on a platform nor in Parliament have I ever attemped to speak either upon the one or the other without a deep and abiding sense of great responsibility.

The point from which I start is this. It is announced as the policy of His Majesty's Government that there is to be a Colonial Conference upon many important subjects; and it is said, as I understand, that that conference is to be carried on as a free, open, and unfettered conference without any limiting instructions whatsoever. My Lords, why is it necessary to put before the country at this time the question of the expediency of such a conference? It has been described by the Prime Minister, and rightly described, as almost in these days a necessary part of the machinery for carrying on our affairs. Why, then, is it necessary that at this time of day it should be thought expedient to consult the constituencies upon the mere expendiency of holding such a confernce?—The answer, I think, is plain. The answer is to be found in the course which what is known as the fiscal controversy has run in this country during the last two years; and I venture to say, further than that, that the only possible obstacle to a free and full conference is the position into which the important subject of the preferential taxation of food has been pushed or manœuvred by those who are in favour of that particular policy. But if that is so, the same reason enjoins upon those of us who are not convinced of the expediency or wisdom of that policy, the duty of examining with care and with the fullest information the conditions upon which that subject is to come before such a conference.

I pause for a moment to ask whether this conference is to be one of the ordinary conferences which have been held at stated intervals during the last few years, or whether it is a new departure of a special kind and for a very special and very important purpose. It is announced that the great dependency of India is to be represented at this conference. One of the questions which I am anxious to have an answer to is, whether India alone of those Colonies and dependencies which are not self-governing is to be invited, or whether Ceylon or others are to be represented at that conference. And, my Lords, I beg to say, in case I should be misunderstood, that the sole object with which I have put down this Motion is to elicit full, accurate, and distinct information, and I have not, if noble Lords on the Front Bench near me will accept the disclaimer, the slightest intention of causing them any embarrassment in the matter. The essential points seem to me to be the conditions under which we are to go into this conference, and the position relatively to that conference in which we shall find ourselves after it has been held. The two points are, in my opinion, closely connected, and to illustrate what I mean I will ask your Lordships to allow me very briefly to glance at some of the essential incidents in the history of the fiscal controversy of the past two years.

We all recall the events of the summer and autumn of 1903, and at that time the idea of a free, open, and unfettered conference in regard to these important matters had not, I think, been thought of; at any rate, it had not been indicated as a cardinal point of the policy of the Government. The conference then, my Lords, on these lines is a comparatively recent development of the events of this controversy. It was mentioned I know, in the debate in the other House of Parliament in August of last year, and very soon after that debate a Question was addressed to the Prime Minister by Sir Howard Vincent as to whether he would summon a conference, and he replied—

> "I hope that these conferences will be frequently repeated, but I do not propose to take any steps at the present moment on the subject."

The next occasion on which we heard of this conference was when the Prime Minister spoke in Edinburgh. We all know, I think, the circumstances of that meeting, and at it this announcement was made—

> "In my view we have got to a point when the only possible way of moving out of the *impasse* in which we now find ourselves, an *impasse* dangerous to the Empire as a whole, is to have a free conference with these self-governing Colonies and with India. It would enable us to determine one way or the other, in the first place, whether these great dependencies desire an arrangement, and, in the second place, whether an arrangement be possible or not."

I am not going to attempt to set up the idea that there is any inconsistency on the part of the Prime Minister between the Answer given in August and the speech in October. The Answer in August was strictly limited to the time at which it was given. I go further than that and say that I believe most thoroughly that the idea which animated the Prime Minister in making the announcement in Edinburgh was the idea, as he says, if possible, of getting out of the difficulties and the *impasse* which had been brought about by the special phases of the fiscal controversy. The same idea has pervaded other speeches which the Prime Minister has made. I will only refer to one or two. In a speech which he made in December, in reply to what is known as the Defence Deputation, he said—

> "If we have the power after the next election, our policy should be to ask the Colonies to join in a conference, and plainly intimate to them that those whom they send shall come unhampered by limitations in this direction or in that direction."

The whole of the speech was an eloquent plea for a high tone in conducting this controversy, and I am sure no one more thoroughly and more cordially would desire to respond to the invitation and to the indications of policy which were given in the course of that speech. The next reference which was made to this subject was in the speech at Manchester, when the celebrated half-sheet of note-paper was produced; and during the present session of Parliament there have been Questions and Answers and debates in the other House. But, my Lords, they all tend to establish, and I am sure His Majesty's Government will not think I am misrepresenting them when I say this, that their idea of this conference is that it is to be absolutely free and unfettered; that there are to be no limiting considerations and nothing to prevent, as I understand it, a free debate on every sort of question affecting the Empire. Other Ministers have said the same. I am not going to weary your Lordships with further quotations. I had intended to refer to a speech of the noble Marquess, who is at the head of the Board of Trade, but he is absent on duty and I shall therefore pass that by. Nor shall I say anything with regard to a speech which was made by the noble Earl the late First Lord of the Admiralty, who has been appointed to a position which, in my opinion at any rate, ought to take him absolutely out of the arena of Party conflict. And if I may turn aside for a moment to say so, there is no one who more ardently and thoroughly wishes the noble Earl all the success which his most earnest friends can ask for him in the difficult and responsible position to which he has been called. As I have said, other Ministers have made speeches. Those in the Cabinet have, I think, taken on the whole very much the same view of the conference; those who are not actually in the Cabinet, but who hold responsible positions, have not, I venture to think, taken quite the same line. I will only refer to two. The Attorney-General spoke at Inverness on January 9th. He undoubtedly said that both sides would enter into that conference absolutely free, but, personally, he believed that the fullest inquiry would show

> "That the taxation of food between the mother country and the Colonies was neither desirable nor practicable—but they should have the facts."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, also occupying a very influential position, does not take quite the same line. Speaking at Warrington, he gave a certain amount of lip service to the idea that the conference was to be held, without the electors committing themselves to anything, to consider whether preferential trade was desirable and practicable; but he went on to announce himself a fiscal reformer as keen as anyone in the country. He wished the inevitable change to be gradual—to be done as circumstances justified the advance; and then he is reported to have used these words—

> "He cared not what was the first step so long as they adopted the principle."

What I am anxious to make sure of is that in taking the first step, whatever that step is, we shall know, and the people of this country shall know, beyond all manner of doubt, whether or not in taking that step we are going to be held as adopting the principle of this great change. There are other views of this conference, and there has been an agitation by another body—I do not know whether to regard them as altogether supporters of His Majesty's Government or not—on this subject of fiscal reform during the same period. But I must go back to the summer of 1903, to a speech which was made by Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons at the time when he was a colleague of the Prime Minister, and, for that matter, I was also in the same position, and it contained a very striking utterance. It is couched in plain and direct language, the meaning of which I think there is no possibility of mistaking. The words to which I refer are these—

> "Now, nothing would be worse than to negotiate with the Colonies and probably come to an agreement with them, and then at the next general election to find that the whole idea was repudiated by the country. I can conceive nothing more dangerous to union than that. Therefore, before we begin to negotiate with the Colonies, we must have some knowledge of what is the opinion of the people of the country with regard to the principle at stake."

My Lords, if I were to approach this matter in a controversial spirit I should say that indications of what the feeling of the country is have not been altogether wanting during the past few months; but the essential part for my purpose of that speech is, that nothing can be worse than to negotiate with the Colonies, and probably come to an agreement with them and find it repudiated by the people of the country at the next general election. But that is the very risk which I am afraid we are running at the present time and under the present circumstances; and I want to know, if I may humbly and respectfully ask for the information, whether His Majesty's Government agree with that expression of opinion. If they do not, what is their answer to it? And, if they do, what course are they going to take to avoid the possible danger indicated?

The matter does not stop there. Mr. Chamberlain spoke at Luton within a few days after the Prime Minister's speech in Edinburgh. I would never have referred to this matter if, after the consideration which must have taken place during certain months, Mr. Chamberlain had altered his views of policy and had frankly and freely and fully accepted the conference proposed by the Prime Minister, not as committing us to a policy, but as one for free and unfettered inquiry. But after saying at Luton that it had been an understood thing hitherto that if the representatives of either foreign countries or the Colonies came to an agreement, that agreement should at once be submitted to the Parliaments and the Legislatures of the separate States concerned, he went on to say—

> "I cannot understand what is the necessity of a second *plébiscite*, involving, as it would do, two mandates, two general elections on the same subject, coming within a few months one of the other. I think it would be very inconvenient and very unpopular; but it is more serious than that. If, after coming to an agreement with your fellow-subjects, you are then to postpone the matter until every Legislature in every one of the Colonies and at home has been re-elected for this particular purpose—if you are going to do this, how long is it going to take?"

My Lords, I do not want to say a harsh thing on any of the speeches which the Prime Minister has recently made, but it seems to me that he is perfectly and entirely oblivious of the fact that any such agitation as this has been going on in the country. At any rate, so far as I know, he has never referred to it in terms either of condemnation or objection. Is it possible under these circumstances to get a really free and unfettered conference? I do not think the Government themselves, when it is thoroughly examined, really propose a free and unfettered conference. As I understand it, they bar the possibility of any preference on raw materials. If you go into a conference with the idea of preference on raw materials barred and yet you are great patriots, why are we who have equally strong objections to a preference in the important matter of food to be told that we are disloyal to the Empire, and that it is impossible to consider this matter except in a free and unfettered conference. Why is it so reprehensible on our part to take exception to the expediency of taxing food? What are to be the instructions to the delegates who go into the conference supposing somebody who comes from Canada should happen to propose a preference on timber as well as on corn, or somebody from Australia should propose a preference on wool as well as on meat from New Zealand. These things are different in degree, but they are not different in kind, and it is because I am anxious to know exactly where we stand that I want to elicit the information for which I am asking.

Another Question I want to put to His Majesty's Government is this, what guarantee is there that the Colonies will come to this free and unfettered conference? They are in their policy protectionists; they have the right to be protectionists if it suits them. We have given them freedom and we do not desire to interfere with their freedom; but, as I understand it, their delegates will certainly come to the conference on the understanding that their general system of protection is not to be interfered with or broken up. Are we, or are we not, to go into the conference on the same understanding with regard to our fiscal system? My Lords, you cannot have it both ways. It seems to me, and I put it strongly because I feel strongly upon it, that the asking and the receiving of this information is, in my opinion, nothing but a matter of simple, downright honest and fair dealing. We are asked to go into a conference. If it is to bind us, you must tell us the policy. If it is free, we must be assured on the authority of everybody who accepts the conference that the people, sometime or another, and in my opinion sooner than later, will have a free and full chance of deciding whether or not they will accept the policy recommended by the delegates. Mr. Chamberlain says it is the custom in conferences to regard the policy resolved upon as binding on the Legislatures concerned. So it may be, but in that class of conference and under those circumstances there are limiting instructions, and the delegates are told what they may agree to and what they may not agree to, and I say, with all the force of conviction that I can put into it, you must take it one way or the other. Either this is to be a free and unfettered conference, or we are to know distinctly and clearly the policy which is to be advocated by our delegates when they go into it.

As far as the other point is concerned, there is danger of delay. There is danger of other questions coming up and interfering with the possibility of putting this matter as a simple and sole issue to the electorate; but until you have in the Constitution something like a *referendum* which you have not got now, that is an inevitable accident of the position in which we are placed. If I am not wearying your Lordships, I will illustrate my difficulty in another way. A good deal has centred recently round the maxim which is to the effect that you must not have taxation except for revenue purposes. I think that was thrown over at Sheffield; and it was also part of the policy upon the half-sheet of notepaper that that maxim was not in its full force to bind us in the future. In January, 1904, the Prime Minister referred to it as an error and a prejudice, at least so I understood him. He referred on the same occasion to his speech to the corn-tax deputation of the previous May, and he used these words, to which I call special attention. He said that even a small duty on food would never be tolerated as a mere fiscal and financial expedient, but that, if it was part of a wider or an essential element in a wider scheme of Imperial union then, and not till then, we might have a small tax on food as part of a preference system. I do not know whether that is intended as an acceptance in principle of the policy of food taxation. I do not like to express a definite opinion upon it, but at any rate I may go so far as this, that anyone who can use that language, who can hold that language, cannot be regarded as in principle opposed to it, and, therefore, if this conference should decide in favour of that policy, I am not sure that we can look to the Prime Minister to stand between us and its adoption. I carry it no further than that.

But to show how far some people go, I will again quote Mr. Chamberlain. Speaking at Liverpool on October 28th, 1903, he ridiculed the doctrine that the justification of a tax is that it is purely for revenue purposes. He laughed at the idea that if the tax only benefits the Exchequer it is a good tax, but if it incidentally or directly benefits any trade it is to be utterly condemned. He went on—

> "Now I call that a preposterous doctrine. My object is—I may be quite wrong in my methods, and everything else may be quite wrong—but my object is simply this: I want to establish a scientific taxation for a taxation which, in my opinion, is a taxation in its most brutal and arbitrary form."

It is never safe absolutely to commit oneself to a general proposition as suitable for all times and for all circumstances; but if there ever was a proposition to which I should be inclined so to commit myself, it is the proposition which has been the canon of our taxation for fifty years—that the justification of a tax is its power to produce revenue, and not its capacity for conferring benefits on this or that class of the population. There may be cases in which that maxim, strictly interpreted, would work injustice, but, if so, it is surely fairer and safer to produce these specific cases and prove them up to the hilt before you take an exceptional remedy and cast discredit on what I venture to think is the only true canon of scientific taxation.

My Lords, I earnestly hope that no one will think it a light matter to try experiments in these negotiations with the Colonies. I hope people will not run away with the idea that you can try this thing and let it drop as and when you will. I venture to say if you do that you are practically certain to come to grief. You will arouse susceptibilities, you will excite hopes which you cannot fulfil, and you will perhaps make bargains which will preclude you from an honourable retreat. This is no new thing. It has been tried before. The history of the country tells you what was the outcome of preferential taxation with the Colonies, and it tells you by bitter experience of the difficulties of getting rid of it once it is started. In my humble opinion sentiment is a stronger and safer tie than business; freedom and equality are better than bargains. I should like to put in, for my own sake, one word of caution. Do not let anyone say that I am opposed to the ideal of a closer union of the Empire. I would be the last to deny that it is a great ideal and an ennobling aim, It is not the ideal of a closer union that we mistrust; but do not let us allow the ideal to entice us into a policy which we shall find to be impracticable. I for one, at any rate, do not accept the assumption that the preferential taxation of food is the only road to a closer union of the Empire. Indeed, I regard it as a road to certain disaster; and the danger I see is that those who want some change, who are discontented with the present circumstances in some respect or another, who say, as few of us can say, that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds, that those who want some change because they think any change will be a change for the better, may be tempted to accept a complex scheme of compromise to which in their calmest reason hereafter they will not be able to assent. Our circumstances and our conditions are not the same as those of our Colonies. Our difficulties and our interests are not the same, but one thing we have in common—the same love of equality and freedom. The services we have rendered to each other in the past have not been rendered in the hope of making a commercial profit out of them; and I venture to say for my part that what has been called the gossamer thread of disinterested affection will bind us together more closely and keep us together more surely than any appeal to the baser motive of commercial gain. I say, let us take care that in appealing to the one we do not weaken the older, and, in my humble opinion, the nobler tie. I beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved to resolve, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary that before the constituencies of the country are asked to determine upon the desirability of a Colonial Conference they should be informed (1) under what conditions the conference will be summoned; (2) what Colonies and Dependencies will be invited to send representatives; and (3) how far any decision arrived at will be held as binding upon His Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom."—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, my noble friend who has just addressed your Lordships has inquired of us concerning certain utterances of His Majesty's Ministers upon a very important matter—the question of a Colonial Conference. No doubt the noble Marquess the Leader of the House will deal with many of the observations which have fallen from my noble friend, but perhaps your Lordships will permit me, as being the representative in this House of a Department of the State closely concerned in this important question, to offer a few observations on the speech of my noble friend. A glance at the terms of the Motion which my noble friend has just moved would suggest to anyone who was a stranger in this country that the Prime Minister had stated that in his opinion a Colonial Conference should be summoned, but that after having given expression to that pious hope he had failed to enlighten his countrymen as to the conditions under which the conference would be held, as to which of our Colonies would be represented, and as to whether, in the event of the representatives at that conference arriving at a decision, it would be binding on the Government of the day. I venture to hope that I shall be able to show my noble friend and your Lordships that every one of these matters have been explained by the Prime Minister. The conditions under which the conference is to be held have been thoroughly explained by Mr. Balfour, and his views are public property.

Though the terms of my noble friend's Motion are comparatively easy to deal with, I confess that the observations which he has made and his reflections are less easy to deal with. It is the desire of His Majesty's Government to resist the Motion which the noble Lord has just moved. Let me say at once that it is the view of His Majesty's Government that there have been lengthy discussions on this principle whether the development of our colonial trade is worth fostering or whether it is not. These discussions have taken place in both Houses of Parliament and throughout the country for a long time past. In our view the time has now come when we must make up our minds to refrain from abstract discussion and attempt to ascertain in a definite way by a concrete method of procedure whether our Colonies are prepared to make us any definite proposals, and, if so, under what terms and under what conditions those proposals would be binding upon the Government of the day. Let me remind your Lordships, briefly, what the policy of the Government is. It has been carefully defined and laid down by the Prime Minister in his speech in Edinburgh and other speeches. The policy of the Government is, if we are again returned to power at the next general election, to summon a conference which representatives of the various self-governing Colonies and of India will be asked to attend. My noble friend asks whether the representatives of the Crown Colonies will be summoned to that conference. I am unable to answer that Question. I feel that it is somewhat premature to give a reply on that particular point; but I can assure him that in this matter the interests and welfare of the Crown Colonies will not be lost sight of by His Majesty's Government.

This conference, as my noble friend has reminded you, is to be unhampered by any precise instructions, limitations or restrictions. It will be free, unfettered, and uncontrolled. What are the subjects which the representatives will be called upon to discuss? They will be asked to discuss whether the idea of a closer union on a commercial or on any other basis commends itself to them, and, if the representatives are favourable to the idea, in what precise manner it can be carried into effect. Any scheme thus formulated will be submitted by the representatives of the Colonies to their respective Governments, and no scheme will be deemed binding on His Majesty's Government until it has been submitted to the electorate of this country. The foregoing is a rough outline of the main principles and the more important considerations of His Majesty's Government as they have been unfolded to us by the speeches of the Prime Minister at Edinburgh and elsewhere, and I confess I fail to understand how my noble friend, after a careful study of the public utterances of the Prime Minister, can claim that the three considerations laid down by him in the Resolution have not been complied with by His Majesty's Government.

I will dwell for a few moments on some of the observations which fell from my noble friend. In the first place I was glad to hear from him that in his view the Cabinet were quite agreed upon the policy laid down by the Prime Minister. That, indeed, is a concession which of late we have been unaccustomed to receive. I do not propose to follow my noble friend into his minute examination of the different public utterances of the Prime Minister and of Mr. Chamberlain. Sufficient for me to say on this point is this, that with regard to this question of the Colonial Conference, and with regard to Imperial trade, the position of the Prime Minister and of Mr. Chamberlain is one in which freedom is indulged and concord is in no way violated. Your Lordships will have observed the tenor of my noble friend's speech. He displayed great anxiety to know the exact position of the conference. He asked us whether it is possible to have a free and unfettered Colonial Conference.

He expressed his doubt whether the representatives of the Colonies themselves will come. He expressed his regret or his alarm at the remarks of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade in one of the many brilliant speeches which he has made throughout the country. He displayed an anxiety and a fear that under certain circumstances something might occur which ought not to occur, or that something ought to occur which might not occur. Indeed, my noble friend displayed far greater concern in regard to minute contingencies which might arise under improbable circumstances than a wish to dwell upon what is by far the most important and serious consideration of all—the causes, the reasons, the imperative necessity for the summoning of a Colonial Conference.

I ask myself, Why is this matter of the summoning of a Colonial Conference a real and a living question? Why is it that a vast volume of public opinion in this country is deeply concerned in this matter? My noble friend alluded to a sentimental consideration, the desire to come closer into union with our fellow-subjects across the sea. All that I thoroughly appreciate, and to it I attach the greatest importance and the greatest value. But, my Lords, I do feel that there is something more than merely these considerations. It is the knowledge on the part of the commercial community in this country that they have not inconsiderably benefited by the trade preferences which have already been granted to Great Britain by our Colonies, and of which the Canadian preference forms the most notable example. My noble friend opposite (Lord Tweedmouth) does not seem to attach great importance to what has happened with regard to trade with Canada. Before Canada granted us preference, from the years 1891 to 1897, British exports to Canada fell from £8,500,000 to £6,500,000, whereas in the seven years subsequent to the preference they have increased from £6,500,000 to £12,500,000, an increase of 80 per cent. That increase in our trade with Canada is mainly and largely due to the preferential agreement entered into by them. Six millions at 10 per cent. represents £600,000 a year clear profit in the pockets of the manufacturing classes of this country. I wonder how many families that sum of money has helped to keep in prosperity and in decency during the last few years. When we consider these facts it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Canadian preference has acted favourably to us here at home.

Your Lordships are aware that New Zealand has also granted us preferences. I do not propose to dwell upon the figures beyond reminding your Lordships that New Zealand imports amount to £13,000,000 a year, of which £10,000,000 come from the British Empire. I hope that we shall keep that trade, and, if we do, I believe it will be due in no small degree to the effect of the preferential tariff. Finally, my Lords, there is South Africa. We are granted in South Africa 25 per cent. preference on all goods coming from the Empire. As many of your Lordships are aware, South Africa to-day imports from the British Empire £33,000,000, and from foreign countries £14,000,000. We possess to-day, therefore, about two-thirds of the whole of the South African trade. To-day this is satisfactory, but what of to-morrow? Quite recently the Americans and the Germans were increasing their trade with South Africa at a greater rate per cent. than we were. We have spent vast sums of money in South Africa; we have placed our new colonies on a sound financial basis and given them suitable government. Are we going to forego the advantages of trading with the new community in our new colonies? Are we going to ignore the great possibilities which lie there in the future? The community to-day may not be very large, but in years to come it may even exceed the population of Canada and Australia. In ten years time, when the whole of the South African imports are not £50,000,000 but £100,000,000, is our relative position compared with foreign countries to be the same as it is to-day? If it is, I cannot help thinking that it will be in no small degree due to the preference which has been granted to us by the South African Customs Union.

I have ventured to remind your Lordships to what degree the Canadian tariff has benefited the manufacturing classes in this country. Your Lordships will observe that Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa have got preferential tariffs which apply not only to this country but to the Colonies themselves; that is to say, the Canadian tariff enables the New Zealander to send his goods to Canada at preferential rates; the Canadian is able to send his goods to South Africa at preferential rates; and the imports into these three preference-giving colonies amount to £110,000,000 a year. £57,000,000 of these imports are Empire imports, and £53,000,000 come from foreign sources. Why, if preference has the effect which we believe it has, and I have ventured to quote the case of Canada, should the division of this trade say in ten years not be £80,000,000 of Empire imports and only £30,000,000 of foreign imports? There is one other consideration which I should like to put before your Lordships. If Empire imports into preference-giving colonies win in ten years £23,000,000 from foreign trade, and we are able to enhance our gain in the increase in trade, for, after all, trade is seldom stationary, surely it follows that we are then going to do a greater business within the Empire itself through the preferential agreements entered into by three of the more important of our Colonies.

Largely increased business means largely increased wealth, and largely increased wealth means largely increased taxable resources. At present, as your Lordships are aware, our Colonies raise all their revenue from import duties, but with increased Empire trade and correspondingly increased taxable resources surely it is not difficult to see that in future the Colonies will be less dependent on import duties for their revenue and will be able to look for that sum from other sources. Is it too much to hope, is it too much to expect, that when that day comes the first consideration of the Colonies will be to reduce their import duties on imports coming from the Empire, while maintaining their import duties on goods coming from foreign countries; and, if that should occur, surely it will be on the road to breaking down those commercial barriers which to-day exist between the different component parts of the Empire; it will be in the direction of freer trade, of free trade itself, within the Empire. Few, I venture to think, in this House would cavil at such an aim. Why, then, should we refuse to entertain this idea of discussing colonial preference, which I would remind your Lordships is the first step towards the aim which so many are in agreement in desiring. In conclusion, to recapitulate, I would remind your Lordships that this conference which the Prime Minister has summoned will meet under conditions which have been fully explained by him. I venture further to remind the House that we have gained not inconsiderably by the Canadian tariff, and that there may be considerably more gain to the Colonies owing to the preferential agreements which they themselves have entered into. Others are more able than I am to dwell upon the enormous gain which accrues to our country in authority and resource in the unity of the Empire. I have confined myself to-night—I know how imperfectly—to the more prosaic, the less emotional aspect of this problem, for I am irresistibly drawn to it, being the representative in your Lordships' House of the Colonial Office, which, having under its charge many lands and many peoples, is absorbed in the development and in the consolidation of a great and a splendid asset.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I am sorry I cannot hold out any hope to the noble Duke who has just sat down that the Answer he has given to this Question will afford much satisfaction to the free-trade Members of your Lordships' House, because it was in effect that His Majesty's Government would lay down no conditions against the time when the Colonial Conference met. The Government may, like the proverbial ostrich, hide its head in the sand and lay down no conditions themselves, but the conditions under which the conference will take place will be those laid down by Mr. Chamberlain himself, and I am quite sure that the free-trade Members of your Lordships' House, at any rate, will not find much satisfaction in that. Perhaps the most interesting phrase in the noble Duke's speech was the one in which he said that the relations between Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain were such that freedom was indulged, and concord by no means violated. I am not quite sure that I understand what that phrase may mean, but, if it has any meaning, it seems to me to mean that Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain have the same ideas with regard to colonial preference; and, if that is so, we have a declaration from a member of His Majesty's Government that they are in sympathy with the taxation of the food of the people of this country. But, my Lords, it is not fair that we should take this only from some chance phrase in the noble Duke's speech. I am entitled to remind your Lordships that Mr. Chamberlain has again and again said that there is no point of principle on which he differs from the proposals which are put forward by the Prime Minister. What we want to know is whether His Majesty's Government accept that definition of their proposals, whether they themselves agree that there is difference between what they propose and what Mr. Chamberlain proposes.

I venture to hope that from an unexpected quarter of this House we may find a recruit. A speech was made only yesterday afternoon by the noble Lord behind me, who was private secretary to Mr. Chamberlain while he was at the Colonial Office, in which he complained that during his recent visit to Australia it was very difficult for the people there to hear anything but one side of the question then being discussed—the question of Chinese labour. I should like to apply that complaint to this question. So far the people of this country have been allowed to discuss only one side of this question, as it affects the Colonial Conference. We have had from Mr. Chamberlain what he is ready to offer to the Colonies, but we have had no sort or kind of suggestion as to what the Colonies are prepared to give to us; and therefore, we are entitled to say that so far as the discussion has proceeded up to the present it has simply gone upon the lines that we are to give, but we have not yet heard what it is we are to get in return. That has had a somewhat serious result, because it has entirely misled the people of Canada. If any proof were needed I could quote the Resolution which was passed in one of the Legislatures of Canada, and, what was still more important, the Amendment which was defeated. The Resolution proposed was in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, and an Amendment was moved to this effect—

> "That the people of Conada, to assist in the successful carrying out of this policy, should be prepared to make such further substantial reductions in the Canadian tariff against British goods as shall ensure to British manufacturers an enlarged market in Canada in return for a preference upon Canadian food products."

That Amendment was defeated, and it seems to me that the people of the Colonies are being grossly misled if they are allowed to think that we are ready to tax the food of the people of this country without getting any adequate return. We are entitled to point out that up to the present we have had no suggestion except one, which having scarcely been made was hastily withdrawn by Mr. Chamberlain after his speech at Glasgow—with that exception we have had no suggestion from the Government or from Mr. Chamberlain as to what should be the colonial side of the bargain.

The noble Lord who moved the Resolution very rightly laid stress on the fact that whether we go into the conference hampered or not the colonial representatives are not in a condition of complete freedom. They are without exception against any revision of their tariffs which would give equal opportunities to British manufacturers. I will quote what was said by Mr. Fielding. Speaking at the Conference of Prime Ministers he said—

> "There must be no misunderstanding on this point."

And speaking on the Budget he said—

> "We cannot undertake to give further preference in a manner which would operate to the disadvantage of our own goods."

If their representatives are to be hampered in the one way, then surely it is not unfair to say that our representatives should have definite instructions given to them not to agree to anything which would result in the taxation of the food of the people of this country. I turn my thoughts to the country where I experienced so many kindnesses, and consider how the proposals which have been made would affect Australia. I am glad that there is the second Governor-General of Australia in your Lordships' House to-night, and I could wish that he would take part in the debate. I desire to point out one aspect of the question which has not received from Mr. Chamberlain or from His Majesty's Government any consideration up to the present time, and that is the way in which these preferential tariffs will affect the people of the Colonies themselves. The great wool industry of Australia would gain nothing. Wool, being a raw material, is not to be taxed; a drought only half as bad as the drought which recently occurred in New South Wales would kill any gain that there might be to the dairy or agricultural industries of Australia; and, lastly —and this is a point which I have not seen any mention of—any preferential tariff must raise the expenses of every household in the colony. For this reason. Imagine a preference given on wheat. The object of such a preference is to raise the price to the colonial farmer The colonial farmer is to get more for it, and the miller in the Colonies will be unable to get any wheat unless he pays the higher price which the farmer can get by sending his wheat to this country. Therefore, if the miller has to pay more for his wheat, the consumer will have to pay more for his bread, and on every article on which you put a preference the cost to the families in the Colonies must be higher. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that such a newspaper as the *Sydney Bulletin* should take a firm line against the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain.

I am naturally not anxious to say that His Majesty's Government are tied down to all the details of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme as he has developed it since he spoke at Glasgow, but we are, I think, guided to some extent by what Mr. Chamberlain said when as Secretary of State for the Colonies he spoke at the last Conference of Prime Ministers. We want to know whether His Majesty's Government hold the same opinion to-day as they did in the year 1902. And there was a still more important speech made by Mr. Chamberlain when speaking to a Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire in London in 1896. At that time also Mr. Chamberlain was Secretary of State for the Colonies. I imagine that he was speaking what is the opinion, or was the opinion then, of His Majesty's Government. We have a right to know whether or not His Majesty's Government have changed their opinion since that day, and in any summons which they send to the Colonial Premiers they ought to express their difference from, or their agreement with, what Mr. Chamberlain laid down so recently as 1902 at the Conference of Prime Ministers. Mr. Chamberlain, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, speaking on Imperial reciprocity, said—

> "This proposal is in effect that while the Colonies should be left absolutely free to propose what protective duties they choose both on foreign imports and on British commerce, they should be required to make a small discrimination in favour of British trade, in return for which we are expected to change our whole system and impose duties on food and raw material. Well, I express again my own opinion when I say there is not the slightest chance that in any reasonable time this country or the Parliament of this country would adopt so one-sided an agreement."

We are entitled, I think, to some expression of opinion from His Majesty's Government with respect to that. Referring to Canadian preference, on which the noble Duke the Under-Secretary dilated at some length, Mr. Chamberlain said—

> "The substantial results have been altogether disappointing to us, and in spite of the preference which Canada has given us their tariff has pressed with the greatest severity on their best customers and has favoured the foreigner."

That was at the opening of the Colonial Conference in 1902, and I am surprised that the noble Duke who represents the Colonial Office in your Lordships' House has got such very different ideas of the result of Canadian preference to-day. The results of Canadian preference, I venture to think, are scarcely so happy as the noble Duke led your Lordships to believe. The noble Duke said that the increase in Canadian imports from Great Britain, from 1896 to 1902, had been 49 per cent.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: What I said was that before the preference British imports into Canada fell 30 per cent, and that subsequent to the preference they have increased 80 per cent.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: I quite agree, but that does not affect what I was about to say. In Canadian imports there has been a total increase from 1896 to 1902 of 83 per cent.; that is from all countries, including Great Britain. In Canadian imports from Germany we find the increase has been 82 per cent.; in imports from the United States the increase has been no less than 106 per cent.; the increase in the imports from France has been 137 per cent., while from Great Britain the increase has only been 49 per cent. It is not as if that ended what there is to say on the subject. The noble Duke, I think, forgets exactly what a tariff is when he speaks of this preferential tariff doing so much good. As the Canadian tariff stands at present it admits a large number of goods quite free into that country. A large number of goods from this country and a very much larger number from the United States of America go in free, and so it is with other countries. The average duty—and this is the figure to which I would draw the noble Duke's attention—under the tariff on all goods going into Canada from this country is 18 per cent., whilst the average duty on all goods going in from the United States of America is only 12 per cent., because the United States send in a much larger number of things which go in free. Our goods are penalised to the extent of 18 per cent., while goods from the United States are only penalised to the extent of 12 per cent. That does not seem to me to be a very magnificent result of a preferential tariff.

I am glad to be able to go still further into these figures, and give the proportion of increase in regard to the goods on which duty is levied and the goods which go in free. While in the time which the noble Duke has mentioned the increase on dutiable goods has been from 20,000,000 dollars to 45,000,000 dollars, during the same time the increase in goods which have gone in free has been from 9,000,000 dollars to 16,000,000 dollars, and so it is with regard to the details of the figures of every single one of the various countries which send in goods. It goes to prove what little effect a preferential tariff, or, indeed, any duty of any sort or kind, has upon the trade of a country itself; for we find that while the dutiable goods from the United States have gone up from 39,000,000 dollars to 83,000,000 dollars, the free goods have gone up from 31,000,000 to 74,000,000; that is to say, while the free goods have increased by a great deal more than 100 per cent., the dutiable goods have not done nearly so well. We find, with regard to Germany, that while dutiable goods have only gone up from 5,000,000 to 6,000,000, the free goods have gone up from less than 1,000,000 to very nearly 2,000,000, so that here the free goods have not done so well as the dutiable goods, and dutiable goods have, in spite of the duty which has been put upon them, succeeded in finding an entrance into Canada all the same. I think we are entitled to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what action His Majesty's Government will take in regard to Denmark and Norway, countries to which British exports go on a less tariff than Canada gives us.

I should like also to know whether His Majesty's Government have anything to say with regard to the dumping of bounty-fed pig-iron. We are always told that dumping is doing us so much harm. We find that bounty-fed pig-iron comes into this country from Canada, and we should like to know if His Majesty's Government propose to use that famous loaded revolver on this occasion. The loaded revolver, I confess, is always an amusing metaphor to me, for this reason, that it seems to me so utterly characteristic of the economic views of the noble Marquess. Most people going into battle to-day would prefer a pom-pom or mauser rifle, and I venture to think the antiquity of the weapon chosen by the noble Marquess is a symbol of the antiquity of his economic views.

There is one item of information given us by the noble Duke for which I should like to express my thanks. The Government have thrown over the idea that the Colonies have made us any offer, for the noble Duke said that they proposed at this Colonial Conference to find out whether proposals have been made. A good many of us have been wondering for some time what these proposals might be, and most of us were forced to the conclusion that this famous colonial offer was more like a leap year proposal than anything else, that it was a proposal which came from the other side rather than from the Colonies themselves.

I will give the noble Duke one more instance of the effect of preference. In Australia the United Kingdom has 63 per cent. of the import trade; in Canada, in spite of the preference, the United Kingdom has only 25 per cent. One would naturally have thought that the effect of a preferential tariff, if the views of the noble Duke were correct, would have been that we should get a very much larger proportion of the import trade in the country which gave us the preference, but in spite of the preference we do a great deal worse in Canada than we do in colonies which do not give us a preference. As to the other point raised by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, with regard to the representatives who will be present, I should have been glad if the noble Duke could have assured us that there would be representatives of all the Colonies present at the conference whenever it is held. Some of us are quite unable to understand the attitude of His Majesty's Government with regard to the Crown Colonies. I venture to say that it would be a great misfortune that people should be allowed to think in this country or in the Colonies that in our opinion the Colonies are badly treated by the mother country in commercial matters. I think that at the coming conference we might very well discuss a large number of matters on which our relations might be improved, chiefly, I think, in the direction of closer political relationship. We might make it easier for colonists to join our Navy, Army, and Civil Service; but if we go into this conference as it is suggested by His Majesty's Government—a free and unfettered conference—it seems to me it will really be a conference in which our delegates, at any rate, will be seriously hampered by the knowledge of what the feeling of the electorate of this country really is. If His Majesty's Government still refuse to lay down conditions I should not be surprised if the Colonial Premiers seriously consider whether their presence will be of any use at all. If you want a useful discussion you must lay down some limits on which your discussion must proceed. The Colonies have been used long enough by the Tariff Reform League as pawns in the political game. It is time that this was stopped, and that His Majesty's Government explained their whole mind on the subject, not hiding their thoughts, but expressing them openly and straightforwardly.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: My Lords, the Motion on the Paper is, as was said by the noble Lord who placed it there and who opened this debate, one designed by himself specially to be of a harmless character and definitely seeking for information. On the face of it it does not appear that there is anything particularly mischievous or dangerous in that Motion, and I think a natural desire for information is one which very few in your Lordships' House would wish to vote against; but, my Lords, the speech in which it was introduced and the speech of the noble Earl who has just sat down seem to me to show the need of open conferences in this matter. It is precisely to meet the countless difficulties which those two noble Lords see in the way of colonial federation that the most open of Colonial Conferences become necessary. From the point of view which I have always entertained in this matter, the Colonial Conference proposed by His Majesty's Government is not a prime necessity. I and many others have entertained the view that the Colonies have taken action in this matter which it is now our turn to reciprocate, and to establish that principle, I for one, have never seen the need of a Colonial Conference; but there are a number, both in your Lordships' House and throughout the country, who do not share those views, who are anxious, as the noble Earl who has just sat down and Lord Balfour of Burleigh are, to place difficulties in the way, who do not believe that the principles we believe in would be of good to this country, who hold that they could not be carried out without great sacrifices on the part of the people of this country, and who hold that those sacrifices would not be met by corresponding advantages from the Colonies. Can anything be more clear than that the best way to meet those difficulties is to have the most open of conferences, on the most open of terms.

I confess that the speeches which have been delivered in support of the Motion have determined me to vote straight against it, not so much on the ground of what it contains but because I feel that those speeches show the need for excluding limitation from the conference which it is proposed to assemble. One limitation has been made in the matter of this conference, which, in my humble opinion, is of a dangerous character. I understand that it is proposed that not one general election but two should intervene between us and the solution of this question. I venture to think that the solution is of more pressing importance than His Majesty's Government by that decision would seem to intimate. I venture to think that there is a pressing need for some closer federation with the Colonies, and that this dissolving view of general elections is one which is dangerous to this country. It would not be dangerous were it not, in my opinion, possible that the dissolving view of general elections may involve a dissolving Empire, and when I go on to consider the remarks made by the noble Duke in answer to Lord Balfour I am the more surprised at the action of His Majesty's Government in placing this limitation, which I understand is practically the only limitation they have placed on this conference. For what was the argument of the noble Duke? His argument was that we had derived so great a benefit from colonial preference that His Majesty's Government were determined to have an open conference on the subject. If the noble Duke, speaking on behalf of the Government, and voicing no doubt the matured convictions of the Government on this question, is convinced of the importance of colonial preference, is sure of the advantages which will flow from it, surely every year's delay is a matter of possible danger to this country.

After all, in this matter it is not merely a question where protectionists range themselves against free-traders. In this matter there are many who would be willing to make some alteration in our system if they thought they could thereby advance the course of free trade. I suppose it is difficult, if not useless, to appeal to those who are convinced free-traders, and who are afraid of altering their faith by one iota, but I would in all humility submit that it is possible that this paradox may be true, that the best way to advance free trade may be to change our system in the direction of protection. If your Lordships will allow me I will explain that paradox as it occurs to me. I cannot help noticing that other countries, as a matter of fact, enjoy under their system a larger area of free trade than we do. The area of free trade enjoyed by the United States of America is greater than that enjoyed by these islands. Similarly the area enjoyed by Germany or France is greater than the area which we enjoy, and in every case those great communities have arrived at a system of what is really free trade over a large area by a system which began with preference and ended in commercial federation. I think it would be difficult to approach this question if it were not for the hope that the end of colonial preference may be free trade within the Empire, and therefore to begin by a system of preferences, which the noble Duke has shown to be a practical advantage to trade, may end in what I know to be the ambition of your Lordships—real free trade within the Empire. It is the only possible known way of getting nearer to that end.

I would not for one moment compare British Empire or British Colonies to the colonial acquisitions of France or the the United States, but I think it is instructive to observe that France in the case of Madagascar, and the United States in the case of Cuba, have both of them established preferential relations with their colony; that in the case of Madagascar the result was to treble the trade of Madagascar and incidentally to kill British trade with Madagascar, and that in the other case the trade of Cuba with the United States increased from 44,000,000 dollars in the first six months of 1903 to 66,000,000 dollars in the first six months of 1904, preference with the United States having been established between those dates. I think those instances are instructive, and that we who have far greater opportunities in our Colonies and dependencies might well adopt a mutual system in return for the advantages which have been given to us by the Colonies.

The noble Earl who spoke last asked the old question, Where is the colonial offer? This is hardly the moment to quibble about the precise term. I am prepared to stand on the actual deeds of the Colonies in granting us a preference; I am content with the declaration on behalf of His Majesty's Government that that preference has been of advantage to this country; and I will only add this, that I trust, now that we have this clear expression of opinion as to the value of preference, the noble Duke the Under-Secretary, and the right hon. Gentleman who presides over the Colonial Office, will not cease to urge the importance of the information which they possess and the views which they entertain in regard to this question on the Government as a whole, and that the Government will enter upon this conference as free as may be, and, if possible, free from the one limitation to which I have taken objection.

*THE EARL OF LYTTON: My Lords, in the beginning of his speech the noble Duke who answered on behalf of the Colonial Office declared that it was the intention of His Majesty's Government to oppose the Motion moved by my noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh. Now, my Lords, I must confess I have some difficulty in understanding the reasons which have induced His Majesty's Government to come to this decisions and, moreover, to go to the length of issuing a three line Whip to their supporters to oppose this Motion. The Motion, as I read it, affirms no policy to which the Government can take any exception; it lays down no principle which they would be prepared to dispute, and it contains no criticism of one item either of their present or of their future policy. It is not even an abstract discussion of an ideal to which the noble Duke referred in his speech and to which we know the Government have very strong objection. Indeed, the most minute examination of the terms of this Motion can detect no meaning whatever except a modest request for the fullest possible information upon a subject of the most supreme importance to the country.

I can only conclude that the reason which has induced the Government to oppose the Motion is that they have detected some plot hidden away amidst the words in which it is framed. If that indeed, is the case, I fear they have fallen into an error similar to that which was committed by a very distinguished foreign Admiral not long ago. My noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh is merely a peaceful trawler, fishing for information in the dark and deep waters of fiscal ambiguity, but His Majesty's Government, after turning upon it the full glare of their official searchlights, seem to have discovered in this Motion some hostile demonstration which is threatening them with destruction. I do not believe that my noble friend had any unfriendly intentions whatever towards the Government in putting this Motion on the Paper; and although I agree with his Motion and should vote for it if it went to a division, I at any rate, in supporting that Motion, have no hostile intention whatever towards His Majesty's Government. Indeed, although I have found it necessary in the past to express dissent from several items in the fiscal policy of His Majesty's Government, I think I have found in this last item of their policy, in the matter of a Colonial Conference, one subject, at any rate, in which I can cordially agree with them. At the same time it does seem to me that the request of my noble friend for information on this subject is not altogether unreasonable, because as he has pointed out there are still several matters connected with this policy of a conference which require further explanation.

There are, in the first place, the points to which the noble Lord himself referred in his speech; in addition there are other difficulties connected with the fact that in June of next year an ordinary conference will in any case be summoned of representatives of the various Colonies. It is in connection with the summoning of that ordinary and normal conference that some of the difficulties in connection with this conference arise. If there is to be an election between now and June of next year, and if by some happy chance the present Government is again returned to power, then I think the matter is quite clear. It seems to be obvious that, in place of summoning the ordinary conference which will meet in any case, His Majesty's Government, having received a mandate from the country, would so augment the representation at that conference as to convert it into an extraordinary and plenipotentiary conference to discuss this question of the commercial relations between the different portions of the Empire. So far there is no difficulty ahead. But suppose the present Government is still in office in June of next year. It is not altogether impossible that that may be the case, for the Government has already remained in power much longer than noble Lords opposite ever hoped, and longer even than some of their supporters expected, and we have recently had the assurance of the President of the Local Government Board that the result of recent elections will not in any way influence the Government in appealing to the country. They intend, he told us, to remain in office so long as they received the support of the House of Commons. If the Government is in office in June of next year I should like to be informed whether it is their intention to postpone the meeting of the ordinary conference which would naturally take place until after the general election, or whether that conference will meet in any case, and, if it meets, whether it will be free to discuss, unfettered and untrammelled, the whole question of the commercial relations of the different parts of the Empire, and to come to some decision with regard to that point; and, if that be the case, whether another conference will be summoned immediately after the election to reconsider exactly the same subjects as the ordinary conference has already considered.

These points appear to me to be still somewhat ambiguous and to require further explanation; but if there is doubt on these points, one point, at any rate, I think, is abundantly clear, and that is that, whether there be an election before the conference or not, the proposals of the conference, if there be any, will not be placed before Parliament until they have been submitted to the judgment of the electorate of this country. I hope there is no doubt upon that point. The noble Marquess will correct me if I am wrong, but that is what I understood from the speeches of the Prime Minister, and it is what I understood again from the speech of the noble Duke this afternoon. If that be true, my Lords, I would ask you to consider for one moment what it means. It means that no proposals will be submitted to the country or to Parliament until after the election which follows the conference. It is as well, I think, to emphasise the point that has been made clear with regard to that conference rather than points which are still in obscurity. This point, at any rate, seems to be one of very great importance.

Apparently there were two objects which the Prime Minister had in view when in his Edinburgh speech he declared it to be his intention to summon this Colonial Conference. The first was, I gather, to provide a rallying ground on which the contending sections of the Unionist Party might be able to unite; and, secondly, to promote the best interests of the British Empire. I will deal with the first and smaller of these objects first, and will ask how this proposal made by the Prime Minister at Edinburgh affects the Unionist Party in relation to the proposals put forward by Mr. Chamberlain. We have it clear, in the first place, as a result of this declaration that the Government have declined altogether to take upon themselves the responsibility of deciding for or against the question of preferential tariffs, and have refused themselves to formulate any proposals on the subject. That they have left to the conference. In the second place, it is clear that the conference itself cannot be summoned until the Unionist Party is again victorious at the polls; and, finally, it will be the proposals of that conference and no other which will be submitted to the country for its decision, provided always that the conference adopts any proposal. That is to say, my Lords, if I understand it aright, that the proposals put forward by Mr. Chamberlain will never be submitted to the country at all unless by chance they happen to coincide with the decision arrived at by the conference. At any rate the 2 per cent. duty on corn and the 10 per cent. duty on manufactures disappear altogether for the present, and their place is taken by some proposals which may or may not be made at a conference which is to assemble some time in the distant future. Surely if that means anything it means this—that "the Question is that the Question be not now put." Nor will it be put in the next Parliament nor in the Parliament after the next. Indeed, one is inclined to ask with Mr. Chamberlain how long it is all going to take. When the time comes at which the Question will be put, we do not know who will form the Government or who will form the House of Commons that will have to decide upon it. The whole question is relegated to the dim and distant future, and I noticed that the noble Viscount who spoke last did not find very great satisfaction in this indefinite postponement of the question. Unlike the noble Viscount it is precisely on that account that I support the Prime Minister's proposal.

I now come to the second point—the interests of the Empire. This shelving of the whole question of preference was put forward not only in the interest of the Unionist Party, but in the interest of the Empire itself. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, speaking in your Lordships' House on July 22nd of last year, used these words—

> "I confess I do not see anything pusillanimous in a refusal to be hurried into a decision on questions so momentous. This is a tremendous problem. If I may use a homely simile we are asked to ride at a fence a fall over which might break every bone in the body of the Empire."

But, my Lords, since the Edinburgh speech there have been set up not one fence but many fences, indeed, we now have a regular Grand National, or I might almost say Grand Imperial steeplechase, a fall over any one of the fences of which might break all the bones in the body of the British Empire. In the first place, there is the next general election, a not inconsiderable obstacle to be surpasssed; then there is the conference itself at which all the difficulties which have been put forward in your Lordships' House to-night, and which have been discussed up and down the country for the past three years, will have to be thrashed out again. The representatives of the different parts of the Empire will have to find a means of reconciling all the divergent interests concerned. They will have to ascertain whether it is possible to arrive at a convenient preferential system without the taxation of raw material, and one which, if suited to the Colonies, will also be suited to our Empire of India as well as to the United Kingdom. And, finally, after these two fences have been successfully cleared, there remains the final election at which the decision of the conference is to be put, not only to the people of this country but, if I understand aright, to the electorates in each one of the self-governing Colonies. Here are three fences at any rate, a fall over any one of which might break all the bones in the body of the British Empire. If that were true, my Lords, I do not think there is an insurance company in the world who would take the risk, and we might look upon the bones of the British Empire as already doomed to be broken. But the fact is, fortunately, that the British Empire is safer than the noble Marquess would have us believe. Whatever may happen at the different stages in this steeplechase, whatever may be the final solution arrived at by the conference, it is tolerably certain that the British Empire will not break up by a single vote of the electorate in any one of its component parts.

I would like to refer for one moment to a point which was emphasised in the speech of the noble Duke. He laid great stress on the importance of commercial union between different parts of the Empire and on the need for a further extension of the system of preference. It is quite true that trade is a very powerful binding force between nations, and perhaps the strongest force which can bind one nation to another. That I do not dispute for one moment; nor do I dispute the value of the preference already given by Canada and other countries to the mother country; but if trade is to be binding between one country and another, that trade must be a free and natural trade and not an artificial trade. I would ask your Lordships to note the difference between the operation of the two. In the case of natural trade all the bargaining is done between private individuals, but all the advantage of those different transactions is reaped by the nation itself; but under a preferential system such as we are asked to establish all the bargaining would be done by the Government and all the advantage and profit would be reaped by individual traders. Further than that, in any system of private bargaining each individual seeks to obtain for himself every possible advantage, the buyer buys that which he needs the most, the seller sells that which it is most profitable for him to sell, but under this preferential arrangement each partner to the bargain would be asked to do that which he considers both disadvantageous to himself as well as theoretically foolish. Protectionist colonies would be asked to give up their system of protection which they consider to be necessary to their prosperity, and we in this country would be asked to abandon that system of free trade which is ingrained already in the traditions of this country, and with which we should be most reluctant to part. That is why we hold that, though a commercial union if based on free and natural trade may be good, if it is distorted by tariffs it is bound to do harm.

It is only by a fearless assertion of the individual needs of different parts of the Empire that we can learn to understand each other properly. No doubt before we can advance to a further stage of consolidation much time must pass by and considerable patience must be expended. But the British Empire is strong to-day. The ties which bind it are powerful ones, and if that is true we owe it not a little to the exertions of Mr. Chamberlain himself and to the work which he accomplished at the Colonial Office between 1895 and 1903. I cannot comment upon that at any length without straying too far from the Motion which we are discussing, but I would ask your Lordships, whatever you may think of Mr. Chamberlain to-day, not to forget the services which he has rendered to the Empire in the past, and whether you agree now or not with the preference proposals which he has put forward, to remember that during the years which he passed at the head of the Colonial Office he did devote his great ability and great energy to the cause of Imperial unity. Throughout that time Mr. Chamberlain appealed to the highest instincts and best traditions of the British race all over the world; and in the name of their common race, in remembrance of their common past, and in anticipation of that future which might yet be theirs, he appealed to them to put aside all other considerations and to set to work upon the task of consolidation with united effort and in a spirit of mutual self-sacrifice. His words and work alike helped to bring together many scattered and divergent elements, so that their very variety made for uniformity, and the patriotism with which he endeavoured to inspire them wrought benefit as well as credit to themselves. These were the ideals to which he appealed, these were the sentiments which he endeavoured to evoke, this was the work which I think he accomplished; but, though we remember all this, it does not prevent us from noticing also a very different tone, and a new and jarring note, in the speeches which the right hon. Gentleman has made ever since he coupled the cause of tariff reform with the cause of Imperial unity.

The passions which he now endeavours to invoke are no longer worthy of the great cause which he has at heart. Instead of goading his fellow-countrymen into further effort he is for ever applying the balm of self-pity and seeking to arouse in them a sense of injury for which there is no justification. Trade he no longer represents as a transaction of mutual benefit to all the parties engaged in it; he refers to it rather as an act of aggression or plunder. He tells us that foreigners are invading our markets when they sell us something of which we have need. The Colonies are described as coming to our assistance when they buy from us something which they require themselves. Our industries are said to be in decay, everywhere it is failure to which he appeals rather than success; grievances and complaints are encouraged rather than heroism and self-sacrifice. The result is that the whole of this controversy is not only demoralising to the people of the United Kingdom but it is also detrimental to a right understanding of our Imperial relations. The Colonies, I think, have shown a very proper reluctance to be mixed up in our fiscal controversy. They are greatly to be commended for the reticent and dignified attitude which all through they have adopted, but the result of that reticence is to set up a not very seemly dispute in this country about what they have offered or will offer, and what we will or will not give them in certain contingencies. It is with the object of putting an end to such disputes and of placing our Imperial relations on an altogether higher footing that I welcome the proposal of His Majesty's Government to summon an Imperial Conference. As I understand it, it implies a determination on their part to raise the whole question of Imperial consolidation out of the arena of mere Party dispute, and to refer it to an assembly of representatives from all the different parts of the Empire, there to be discussed freely and openly from the points of view of all concerned. Whether I understand that policy aright, whether I understand the intentions of the Government, and the result which their policy will have, I respectfully ask the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary to make them perfectly clear to this House, and through this House to the country.

THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, however noble Lords opposite may regard the action of my noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh in placing this Motion on the Paper, I can assure the House that on these benches we are heartily grateful to him for having done so. I conceive that there never has been, at any rate within recent years, any subject of controversy in this country about which there has been so much loose thinking, and, consequently, so much random talking, as there has been on this fiscal question, very largely due, as we think, to the economy—using the word, of course, in its controversial sense—which has been exercised by the Prime Minister in his observations on this question. In the early debate on this fiscal question the noble Viscount opposite, Lord Goschen, used a phrase which has become almost historical, when he spoke of Mr. Chamberlain's proposal as representing a gamble with the food of the people, and what we on this side of the House fear is that this proposition for a conference, unless much more closely explained than it has been by the noble Duke, represents something like a gamble with our Imperial ties and with the relations existing between the Colonies, the Indian Empire, and ourselves.

If this proposed conference were to be of an ordinary character, I conceive that it would be necessary that the delegates or representatives of the different parties to the conference should arrive with definite views and definite instructions upon the subjects of discussion. It must be assumed by everybody that in a conference of this kind the representatives of the Colonies, and, I suppose, of the Crown Colonies and dependencies, will so arrive, furnished with distinct and definite views of what they require. I should have thought it must necessarily follow that whoever represents this country at the conference must be similarly supplied. The question of the views likely to be held by the representative of this country would, under certain circumstances, be a very simple one. If the representative was one of my noble friends behind me or some right hon. Gentleman who sits on the Front Opposition Bench in another place, it is pretty clear in general terms what his views would be; but if, and, of course, it is conceivable, the representative at such a conference were to be a member of the Party opposite, a member of His Majesty's present Administration, we do not know in the slightest degree with what views on this important question of the taxation of food he would go into the conference, and it is surely necessary for the Government under these circumstances to give the House and the country some indication of the views with which, supposing they were returned to power after a general election, they would go into the conference and what instructions they would give their representative. I must remind the House that if the representative of this country is the only person who goes into this conference with a perfectly open mind his position is no longer that of a member of the conference; his position becomes judicial, and it seems to me a most singular effort of Imperialism that the Colonies should be invited to come here to represent their views before such a tribunal. It seems to me to stand to reason that our representative must be furnished with distinct views or instructions, or he will be an absolutely impartial person in the position of a Judge between the different interests involved, and it seems to me a very singular form of Imperialism to suggest that the Colonies should subject themselves to a supervision of that kind instead of being asked to take an equal part in the conference such as we naturally should suppose they would be invited to take.

Mr. Chamberlain's view in this matter is perfectly clear and well known. He assumes that the representatives of the Colonies will arrive furnished with certain definite proposals which will be discussed in the course of the conference, and he assumes that it would be the right thing for the representative of this country to accept those terms if it can be shown that on the balance this country does not suffer a national disadvantage; that is to say, the Colonies reduce certain duties in our favour, we put on certain other duties which must be, apparently, on food, and the balance is struck between the different parts of the Empire. On that I should just like to say this, that in the first place I do not believe it is possible that such a bargain could be struck at all, but, even if it could, it seems to me to involve confusion between a nation and the individuals who compose that nation in this particular matter. We are continually being taunted with being hidebound political economists who deal with this question in a cold-blooded fashion, on principles derived from economic text-books; but that is exactly the charge which in this particular instance I should bring against Mr. Chamberlain and those who agree with him. They seem to argue that if on a balance you can show that this country is not suffering by a preference of this kind that you have done enough. I think, my Lords, that that cannot be maintained. I think that when you come to taxing the food of very poor people you leave the region of political economy and enter that of political ethics, and I frankly say that, so far as I personally am concerned, I am not capable of conceiving any preferential offer which could be made by the Colonies which in my view would justify the placing of a tax upon corn.

Something was said by the noble Duke and by other speakers as to the actual offers which had been made, or may be made, by the different Colonies in favour of this country. The noble Earl behind me (Lord Beauchamp) dealt very fully with Canada, but I should say, speaking generally, that it is not true that the Canadian preference has diverted any substantial body of trade to the United Kingdom from other quarters. Whether it has prevented a further loss of trade is a matter which is purely hypothetical, and upon which, therefore, anybody may hold any opinion he chooses. But, curiously enough, and I am glad to think it, this preference did bring two very distinct advantages to Canada itself. In the first place, although I suppose a thoroughbred tariff reformer would scarcely admit it to be an advantage, it did to some extent cheapen certain commodities to the Canadian consumer; and, in the second place, it has been said, and I believe it to be quite true, that it reacted in this country to the advantage of the Canadian trader by causing a discrimination here between products coming from Canada and from the United States. Formerly, everything which came across the Atlantic was considered to be American, but of late years a very marked distinction has grown up between Canadian and American produce, and there has been a distinct tendency, where the article was equally good, to prefer the Canadian product. Therefore the Canadian preference, like mercy, blessed both him who gave and him who took, and in this particular instance I am not sure that it did not bless the one who gave most of the two.

As regards the future in Canada, speaking generally so far as our three greatest trades are concerned, it is notorious that within a few years Canada is very much more likely to supply us, not only with crude iron, but with finished iron, than we are to supply

Canada, and therefore it does not seem that Canada can do much for us in the way of preference with regard to iron. As regards cotton, Lancashire has not got very much to fear from any competition in cotton; and in the woollen trade the one thing we do know about Canadian preference is that British textiles will not be admitted into Canada if they interfere with the Canadian manufacture of those goods. As regards Australia, it seems again as though the possibilities were not very large. In considering Australia you must remember that various things which rank as raw material there would not be regarded here as raw material at all. Wire fencing, agricultural machinery, and such things as that are placed on the free list in Australia, because they are the raw material of the great industry of that country, and it is just in those particular articles that the United States have of late years gained the most ground over us, and, consequently, if you come to bargaining with Australia you will not find that you will be able to get any preference on those articles because they are already placed in the free list.

The noble Duke mentions South Africa, and I should be very much obliged if he or some other member of the Government would state what form a South African preference is to take so far as this country is concerned. South Africa has given us a certain preference, but I have not heard it suggested how, without taxing raw materials, any preference can be given to South Africa in return. On the question of raw material I should just like to say this, that it seems sometimes to be rather airily assumed that the taxation of raw material will not be considered by the conference when it is held; but Mr. Chamberlain said across the floor of the House of Commons that that was not so, and that the question of the taxation of raw material would be open to consideration by the conference just as any other part of the fiscal question. If you begin with the taxing of food the time will come when you will be told that on Imperial grounds it is absolutely necessary to tax raw material. The noble Duke, in almost thrilling tones, told us that he hoped the day would come when in response to our action in this matter the various Colonies, being no longer in need of so much revenue in the form of duties, would take the opportunity of reducing those duties still further in our favour; and the noble Viscount opposite (Lord Ridley), from whom I certainly did not expect such an observation, because I frankly believed that as head of the Tariff Reform League he was a protectionist, held out hopes that these preferences might be the beginning of a reign of free trade within the Empire. That seems to me, I confess, a very wild and uncertain forecast. If I did forecast what would be likely to happen my forecast would be of an entirely different character.

I believe that once this country had tasted the blood of protection it would go on increasing its tariffs, and I believe, furthermore, that it would not be content with placing duties upon goods from foreign countries alone. The final result would, I believe, be that you would have an all-round tariff of considerable magnitude against foreign countries and a smaller preferential tariff against colonial goods in cases where they competed with industries or products at home. The whole question seems to me to come to this, that in this Colonial Conference as proposed—this *ad hoc* conference—we see something in the nature of a trap, and, if I may adopt the words of the Prime Minister which he used in another connection in another place, I would say people are perfectly right to lay the trap, but we have also a perfect right to keep out of it if we can. The trap appears to me to be this, that what Mr. Chamberlain and his friends calculate is that if this conference is held they will then be able to go round the country saying, "After inviting all these distinguished gentlemen here to discuss this matter you cannot in decency send them empty away, as that might endanger the relations between this country and the Colonies."

That is a reason, in my opinion, for a frank avowal at once that, so far as can be judged, this country is not prepared even to discuss the question of taxing food. It is merely a waste of time and almost, I take it, an insult to the Colonies to invite them to a discussion which includes taxation of food, when it is quite certain that the country will not grant that taxation of food. When you come to discussing anything in a general conference held not *ad hoc* but in the ordinary way, I certainly should be very far from saying that if any member of that conference desired to raise any question whatever he should not be at liberty to do so; but that is a totally different matter from inviting representatives from all parts of the Empire for a special purpose to discuss this fiscal question alone, and then, as I say, laying ourselves open to the very obvious retort that it would have been very much better to have told these gentlemen before they came that there was one side of the question which we did not consider open for discussion at all. I do not for a moment believe that our attitude, if we were now to declare it, would be in the slightest degree misunderstood by the Colonies. They have never shown any signs of desiring to force a preferential policy upon us; still less have they shown any signs of a desire that we should tax food. On the contrary, they have, almost ostentatiously, explained that they consider it a matter for the inhabitants of these islands to decide for themselves. The opinion in this country being so certain as it is, it would be an infinitely more manly and generous course to tell the Colonies that that opinion cannot admit of the taxation of food, and that, so far as colonial preference depends on the taxation of corn and other articles of food, it is useless to consider it. I sincerely hope that my noble friend will press his Motion to a division.

The LORD CHANCELLOR of IRELAND (Lord Ashbourne): My Lords, I have listened with attention to what has fallen from the noble Earl who has just sat down and who has stated the standpoint of the Opposition with more frankness than I have noticed in any of the previous speeches. Up to the present, the line taken has been that no one objects to a Colonial Conference, but the noble Earl takes a franker way. He says that he regards this suggestion of a conference as a trap to be avoided, and that he would therefore vote for the Motion now before the House with a view to making difficulties and interposing obstacles in the way of the holding of the conference. The fiscal question at large is not for discussion to-night, although noble Lords have taken the opportunity to make various dives into it from their point of view. I put to your Lordships this one broad question. Surely it is better, if a conference is desired, to let it be a frank and free conference. The great and representative men who will attend the conference should be free to consider the question and to express their sentiments subject to the responsibility which they owe to the countries they represent. Everyone expresses himself in favour of strengthening the bonds that connect our great Colonies to the mother country; everyone expresses delight and admiration at the way those bonds were strengthened by the great aid received by the mother country during the war in South Africa; yet doubts are now thrown on the attitude of the Colonies towards the mother country in the matter of trade. Surely it is wise and reasonable that the representatives of the great Colonies should meet and frankly interchange opinions unfettered and unsuspected, and not regarded as men entering into a trap.

The Earl of CREWE: I never hinted for a moment that the colonial representatives were laying a trap. It is the noble and learned Lord and his friends who are doing that.

Lord ASHBOURNE: That is only playing with the expression. The people who would come here as representatives of the Colonies are not simpletons: they are the greatest statesmen the Colonies have produced; and surely those men when they come over should be free to consider the question and to express their sentiments unfettered. It is a matter for congratulation that the ties of affection, sympathy, and blood which link together the component parts of this great Empire should be so strong; but if an additional tie can be found by the honest interchange of frank opinion, surely everyone should welcome it. My noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies pointed out circumstances that go to show that this country has gained by what has taken place through the voluntary action of Canada. That, however, was called in question by Earl Beauchamp. I will not attempt to prejudge this question; but, if commercial arrangements can be made advantageous both to the Colonies and to this country, it would be madness and not statesmanship to interpose any obstacle in the way of them. Why are noble Lords opposite afraid of discussion and the free interchange of views? Why do they try to hamper and fetter discussion? The question before the House is not the fiscal question but the narrow question of whether the conference should be useful and free or bound and muzzled.

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, we have had an interesting debate this evening in which noble Lords have set before us, as the noble and learned Lord who has just sat down has done, in terms of eloquence, matters affecting our great Empire. We have also heard the advantages which we would derive from a system of preferential tariffs sketched out by the noble Duke the Under-Secretary. It will be my brief task to recall your Lordships to what is the real question which we are debating this evening. No Answer whatever has been given to the specific Questions asked by Lord Balfour. The noble Duke the Under-Secretary informed us that all the Questions which my noble friend had put on the Paper had already been complied with by His Majesty's Government. If that is a fact, why does not the Government accept this Resolution? They have, on the contrary, issued a Whip to their supporters, and from the speeches which have been made by responsible Ministers it is obvious that they are going to oppose the Motion. Everyone on this side of the House, at any rate, heartily welcomed the Motion which Lord Balfour moved, because, if the questions in it were answered, the fiscal air would be cleared, and Ministers would be able to appeal to the constituencies "whether this idea of fiscal union is one which commends itself to us." That was what Mr. Balfour put forward at Edinburgh as practically the terms of reference to the proposed conference. What we want to know is what is the official position of His Majesty's Government as regards this proposed conference? Is it to be a conference *ad hoc*—a conference simply for the purpose of finding out, as Mr. Balfour proposed, whether this idea of fiscal union is one which commends itself to us, or is it to be "the premeditated and usual conference" concerned with all the affairs of the Empire, and with this issue of preferential tariffs thrown in as a sort of *bonne-bouche*?

I will not weary your Lordships by quoting long passages from the speech of the Prime Minister at Edinburgh, but I think there is no doubt that at that time Mr. Balfour intended it to be an *ad hoc* conference; it was to be, moreover, a conference which would require a general election preceding it and a general election following it. The first general election was to sanction the proposed conference which was to determine whether this idea of fiscal union commended itself to the Colonies and ourselves or not, and the second general election was to appeal to the electorates of the self-governing Colonies and of this country as to any scheme which might be hammered out by the conference. Those are not my words, but the words which the Prime Minister himself used at Edinburgh last year. This proposition was confirmed by the noble Duke's chief, Mr. Secretary Lyttelton. Mr. Lyttelton went to Glasgow to speak on behalf of the Prime Minister who was then unwell, and in his speech at Glasgow in December, 1904, he undoubtedly confirmed the view that Mr. Balfour had put forward previously in Edinburgh. He also, as I read his speech, brought forward the doctrine of two general elections being absolutely necessary, the first one to enable the representatives of Great Britain to go into the conference armed with the authority of the people. That was the first general election. The second one was, of course, in order to refer to the electorates of this country and the self-governing Colonies the plan hammered out at the conference, and this was to be done before the Government could bring in their scheme of preferential tariffs. But previous to this a deputation waited on the Prime Minister at the Foreign Office with regard to Imperial defence, and the statement of the Prime Minister on that occasion seemed to make the conference rather wider. It was to cover other matters, because he stated on that occasion that it would be improper that any such conference should be prevented from discussing anything connected with the closer union of the Empire. Therefore, it would seem that after the meeting at the Foreign Office the views of the Prime Minister, and, presumably, of the Government, were rather enlarged. It was not to be an *ad hoc* conference, but a conference which was to determine any other matters that might naturally come before such a distinguished body.

Mr. Secretary Lyttelton at Glasgow stated—and this is an important point, in my judgment—that the conference would be the same conference which had been already determined upon by the previous Colonial Conference in 1902. Your Lordships are aware that at that conference a Resolution was passed that there should be another conference held in 1906, and, as I understand Mr. Lyttelton, it is that conference to which both he and the Prime Minister were alluding as the one in which preferential tariffs were to be discussed. It is because we have up to this moment received no reply from Ministers opposite that I am obliged to put this case so laboriously before the House. My interpretation of the official position is this, that the conference is to be the conference which had already been determined upon, *plus* a reference to preferential tariffs. If that is the case, incidentally we are led to perceive clearly a subject which has been much thought of and much debated in the country and in Parliament. Your Lordships will observe that this conference is to be preceded by a general election, and if the conference is to be the ordinary conference of 1906, we have now for the first time arrived at what are the limits of the present Parliament, for before the conference of 1906 meets there must be a general election. Therefore it is quite obvious that if the conference is held in May, June, or July of next year there must be a general election some time before that date. I should like to know from His Majesty's Government whether that is the fact or not, and whether my interpretation of the declarations of Ministers is right.

There is another point which has already been referred to to-night but which is undoubtedly of primary importance. The conference, we have been told by the Prime Minister and by other distinguished members of His Majesty's Government, is to be free and unfettered. Does that mean that representatives are to attend it with open minds and that they may come out of the conference free-traders or protectionists? Speaking from my experience both in Parliament and on platforms in the country I think it would be very difficult to find a man of an open mind on this fiscal question after all the controversy there has been. But the opinions of many of the representatives of the Colonies are known; they have been expressed by resolution and by speeches. Some reference has been made to this matter by my noble friend Lord Beauchamp. The Legislature of Manitoba also passed a Resolution in which they said—

"This House strongly commends and endorses the policy advocated by Mr. Chamberlain."

Yes, but there was a rider put forward to this original proposition, and in my humble judgment that rider stated what the policy of preferential tariffs is according to the late Colonel Secretary better than the very vague words of the proposition. The rider declared that the people of Canada should be prepared to make such further substantial reductions in the Canadian tariff against British goods as should ensure British manufacturers an enlarged market in Canada in return for a preference by Great Britain on Canadian products. That, I think, represents the ideas of tariff reformers; but what happened to that unfortunate rider? It was defeated in the Legislature by twenty-eight votes to nine, and therefore it is obvious that it is not the intention of these representatives of Canada, at any rate, to give to British goods in return for preferential tariffs an enlarged market in Canada.

Then I turn to Australia. What is the opinion of Australia with regard to preferential tariffs? In the Commonwealth Parliament the Prime Minister, Mr. Deakin, questioned with regard to that much disputed question of an offer, which I will not go into, said he thought Mr. Chamberlain referred to Canada and South Africa.

> "If the allusion was meant to refer to anything else" (said Mr. Deakin) "it must have been to the Resolution passed at the Conference of Colonial Premiers in London in 1902 in favour of preferential trade."

He was then interrupted by the Leader of the Opposition who said—

> "That conference did not represent the views of Australia but of seven gentlemen."

And then comes the pith of the matter. There was another interruption by a member of the Commonwealth Parliament who asked—

> "Is there any danger of the tariff being reduced in favour of the home country?"

And the Prime Minister replied—

> "If there is any such danger it will come from my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition."

So that the official opinion of the Government of the Australian Commonwealth is that there is no danger of the Australian tariff being reduced in favour of the home country. These are the opinions of a gentleman who you are going to summon to your conference. These representatives are very important statesmen in their own country. Their opinions are well known. The opinions of right hon. Gentleman and noble Lords in opposition are well known. What we want to know is, what are the opinions of His Majesty's Government?

Perhaps I may be allowed to refer for a moment to the opinion of New Zealand as expressed by no less an Imperialist than Mr. Seddon, the Prime Minister. Speaking in the summer of last year, in recommending Mr. Chamberlain's scheme, he said—

> "This course would not increase imports from the mother country and would check imports from alien countries."

So this dream of the tariff reformers falls to the ground, and in the case of New Zealand, where we were told to look for largely-increased trade, we are informed by Mr. Seddon that the imports from the mother country will not be increased to the slightest degree. Then what is the use of a conference for the purpose of gathering the opinion of the Colonies when that opinion has been already declared by their responsible statesmen. I am myself in favour of Colonial Conferences. The noble and learned Lord the Lord Chancellor of Ireland rather twitted my noble friend Lord Crewe with being, I suppose, a Little Englander because he said that this conference would be a trap. As I understood my noble friend, he thought it would be a trap for the colonial representatives unless we informed the Colonies that the people of this country absolutely refused to have taxes put upon their food. On great Imperial subjects where agreement would conduce to strength of union a conference may well be useful, but there must be no false impression at the outset; the colonists must not be led to suppose that the people of Great Britain would accept food taxes. Without this clear understanding a conference would be a danger and a snare, and friction might be created that would take many years to allay.

The debate was suspended from half-past Seven until Nine of the clock.

On the resumption of the debate.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, this Resolution seems to me one which, although apparently the Government are not prepared to acquiesce in it, is nevertheless not unreasonable, because this House and the country should ask for information. We were told by two or three speakers on the side of the Government that, as I gathered, the objection to the Motion was that it was essential that the conference, when it takes place between the representatives of this country and the representatives of the Colonies, should be an open conference. The noble Lord the Lord Chancellor of Ireland said with emphasis: "Let it be a frank and a free conference." I think, my Lords, that any conference ought to be a frank and a free conference, that is to say, that the persons who meet round the table to discuss questions should be free to discuss them from their own point of view. But does anyone suppose for a minute that the fact that a conference is frank and free in any way prevents the giving of instructions to the representatives as to the lines they should take. It is obvious that every colony when they send a leading and important man to speak on their behalf will give their representative instructions as to the lines he should take, what concessions, if any, they are prepared to make, and on what points he is to remain firm. Is it to be supposed that this country is to send its representatives without any instructions, and without knowing what they will say, or what their point of view will be. The principals in this conference are not the persons who attend and speak; the Secretary for the Colonies will not be a principal, nor the Cabinet, nor the present Parliament; the principals are the people of the United Kingdom whose interests are involved. That, I think, was admitted by Mr. Balfour in the early stages of this discussion.

I shall not follow the noble Lord the Earl of Crewe who tried to track Mr. Balfour's various utterances and to find shades of difference between the earlier and the later speeches. No doubt as an exercise of dialectics that might be done if we cared to spend our time upon it. At any rate, in the more studied and careful expositions of his policy we had, what I think is obvious, a declaration that before any effectual conference would be held with the Colonies, the country shall be consulted, and its views expressed through an election of a Parliament, and then no doubt the Government, whatever it might be, would have what people are pleased to call a mandate. Mr. Balfour has, during the whole discussion on fiscal policy, emphasised the fact that nothing should be done until the country has expressed an opinion and given a lead to those who are to speak on its behalf. Yet we are told that the Government is not prepared to indicate to us on what lines they will instruct their representatives to speak in this conference. I feel, my Lords, that you are not only preparing disappointment for yourselves, but that you are preparing for bad blood and trouble with the Colonies if you encourage people to embark on a conference without letting them know beforehand the limits within which it is possible for you to negotiate with them and the limits beyond which you will not negotiate.

I should like to see this Return granted, and I am sorry that the Government seem to think it consistent with their dignity and self-respect rather to assume an attitude of inertia and mental vacuity on this subject instead of telling us exactly what they think. After all, the Colonies will not be hoodwinked. Whether the Government like it or not, everyone will see that the country, whenever it has an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the subject, does so very clearly. Even the House of Commons expressed its opinion the other day with equal clearness and emphasis. I think it is quite idle for persons who are, as it were, the agents of a nation, to pretend that they can enter upon negotiations on behalf of that nation in defiance of the expressed unanimous opinion of the representatives of the nation. Of course if you say that the elected House has lost all representative character and is not entitled to speak for the nation, that is a position which Governments are entitled to take up, but they are only entitled to take it up on one condition, and that is that they appeal from the legal voice of the nation as expressed through its representatives to the actual voice of the nation as expressed at the hustings. But you cannot have it both ways. You cannot say you have no occasion to consult the opinion of the nation because you have the confidence of the nation's representatives, and at the same time say, "We will treat them with contempt and not stir a finger to defend ourselves."

I say the Colonies are not deceived. Our views on this matter are not hid under a bushel; they are known to the far corners of the world. Does anyone suppose that the Colonies will lightly enter into negotiation on the basis that seems to be foreshadowed as the policy of the present Government by the speech made by the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, namely, a policy which rejoices in this preferential and differential treatment, and would make great efforts to carry it. In my opinion the Government at this moment are too much discredited to be able to pose as the representatives of the nation, and everything must be at a standstill until the nation has been consulted. Certainly the discussion of a question freely among representatives is not inconsistent with a definite policy being held by any one of the parties to the conference. What I am afraid of is what has already been indicated by another speaker, namely, that you may enable persons at a distance to misrepresent the facts, and to say that hopes were held out to the Colonies which had been disappointed. Everyone would feel in another delicate matter in private life that it is quite open to a woman to reject a man, but if a woman gives encouragement to a man and then rejects him people call her a flirt and say she has behaved very badly. In the same way speeches in Parliament, such as the speech of the noble Duke, who, although he is not responsible for his Department, yet is speaking on behalf of his Department, are in the nature of giving encouragement to this protective and preferential policy.

For myself I should be very sorry if the issue of the approval or disapproval of a policy of preference rested merely on the question of the taxation of food or the taxation of raw materials. To a protectionist colony some widening of the area of trade may be a step towards free trade. If a colony which is absolutely protectionist will break down some of its barriers, even in favour of the great industries of the mother country, that undoubtedly opens to the purchasers in that colony a somewhat wider market than they had before. But we have the open markets of the world, and any policy of preference to a colony is not a wider but a narrower policy; it must be based on the introduction of duties where hitherto goods have come in free, in order effectively to narrow our market of purchase. Do not let it be supposed that we and the Colonies should be negotiating on anything like equal terms. One speaker, I think it was the noble Viscount who is now the chairman of the Tariff Reform Commission, spoke in glowing terms of a possible vision of inter-Imperial free trade between Great Britain and all its dependencies. But I say that Imperial free trade between Great Britain and all its dependencies, if bolstered up by discriminatory tariffs against the rest of the world, would be a narrow and most mischievous policy. We enjoy now free trade so far as we can get it. Noble Lords play upon the words "free trade" and say we have not free trade but free imports. We have what it is in our power to get. What is out of our power we cannot have. So far as our laws, so far as our policy, and so far as our example go we do all that we can to secure free trade. We do not suppose for a minute that free trade is not an advantage to both sides, or that the foreign countries and the Colonies which are protected do not lose by being so, and that when they lose we lose too. It would be a deplorable mistake for us for a paltry advantage which is hardly appreciable to sacrifice the good example we have set to the world and turn aside from a policy which has served us so well for fifty or sixty years. The mischief we should suffer would be far greater than any advantage we might obtain.

As to the case of Canada, I am a little surprised that the noble Duke, who must be familiar with that matter through his office, should have referred to the Canadian figures as showing any advantage under the preferential system. The figures were analysed carefully, and the highest claim that the advocates of that system set up a year or so ago was that it might have arrested the decrease in trade. In the general expansion of Canadian trade, the result of the development of the North West, the trade of Canada with the whole world has increased enormously, but our trade with Canada has not increased so fast as Canadian trade with the rest of the world.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Will the noble Lord forgive me for interrupting. The trade between Great Britain and Canada has increased since the preference at a much greater rate per cent. than the trade between Canada and the United States, and the trade between Canada and Germany. I may add that in the increase of English trade between England and Canada those commodities affected by the Canadian trade have increased at a greater rate per cent. than the rest of the trade with the United States. I should like to remind the noble Lord, Earl Beauchamp, that this is an undoubted fact, and I challenge any figures to the contrary.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: The noble Duke has corrected a statement which I never made. The statement I make is that in the great expansion of the trade of Canada the trade of Canada with the United Kingdom has not increased at so great a rate as the trade of Canada with the rest of the world. I did not mention one country or another. I have some figures here which I will give him. The figures are printed, but I do not know where they come from. They show that the Canadian imports from all countries in 1896 amounted to 110,000,000 dollars, and in 1902 to 200,000,000 dollars, or an increase of 83 per cent. The Canadian imports from Great Britain, which I suppose means the United Kingdom, amounted in 1896 to 43,000,000 dollars, and in 1902 to 49,000,000 dollars or an increase of 14 per cent. The noble Duke can look up in his office figures corresponding with these, and on another occasion he can let me know whether they are right or not.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: Will the noble Lord give the authority for these figures.

*Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY: They were given to me by my noble friend Lord Beauchamp.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: Will the noble Duke agree to defer this discussion until the Motion I have down on the Paper is dealt with.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: I did not know the noble Earl had a Motion down on the Paper. I suppose he has placed it there to-day.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: It has been on the Notice Paper nearly a month.

*Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY: I notice that the noble Duke indicated that it was not fair to compare the lower rate of duties upon goods imported from the United States into Canada with goods imported from the United Kingdom, because the goods imported from the United States are of a lower class, either raw materials or duty free.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: They are all duty free.

*Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY: And thus at a lower rate than those that come from the United Kingdom. Therefore when you work out the average duty charged on the whole of the British goods sent to Canada, they work out at a higher figure. I wish that the noble Duke had been able to prompt his colleagues on the Treasury Bench in the debate on Mr. Brodrick's speech when they stated that Indian goods went into France at a lower rate per cent. than goods from this country. I think it is better that noble Lords when dealing with the figures should elect some consistent basis of a sound character. I quite agree with the noble Duke that he has taken a sound view, but you must not compare rates of duty upon different classes of goods as showing a high or a low tariff. You should compare the same classes of goods. The growth of trade between Canada and the United States, having regard to the long nominal frontier between them, must be expected to be greater than the growth of trade between Canada and the British Isles. No artificial arrangement of colonial preference will permanently stop the natural drift of trade which should go and will go on the lines which are most advantageous to the parties trading. I have tried to make it clear that the fact that this conference, if it ever takes place, will be a free conference, is no reason why this country, which is something above Governments and Parliaments, should not know beforehand what its representatives and agents propose to say on its behalf. That, I think, is essential. I think it is also important that we should warn the Colonies beforehand, if we go into this conference at all, in order that there shall be no disappointed expectations, no hopes raised and afterwards dashed to the ground, which will be injurious to the permanent friendship between us and our Colonies. For these reasons I shall support the Motion it it goes to a division.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of Halsbury): My Lords, I feel great difficulty, which I suspect is not confined to one side of the House, in resisting the provocation to discuss something which is really not before the House at all. This debate is like some others to which I will not further refer in that it is not intended to really discuss the question before the House. It is like what I think is attributed to a celebrated theologian who said he had a text for every sermon and a sermon for every text. One text is intended to be preached and which I observe the speakers cannot get rid of, and that is the desire to establish some difference of opinion between different members of His Majesty's Government. I acquit the noble Lord who brought forward the question of any desire for what I think has been sought to be done in all this debate. I am quite sure, knowing him as I do, and respecting him as I do, that he had no ulterior object and only raised the question in order to do what he thought was necessary for the good of the country. But I think it is impossible to have listened to this debate without feeling that those who have taken part in it have a sort of opinion that in some way or another it is like any other subject which may raise the question of fiscal policy, because it is intended to set what I think the noble Lord, Earl Crewe, described as a trap—a trap to inveigle speakers into discussing the fiscal question generally, and therein the question of whether or not there is some difference or divergence of opinion between the thoughts of the Prime Minister and Mr. Chamberlain. In fact, I notice that the noble Lord who brought forward this Motion referred from time to time, inadvertently I am sure, to Mr. Chamberlain's utterances as if they were the utterances of His Majesty's Government, and referred to them as being identical with the views of Mr. Balfour. All I will say upon that subject is that they have expounded themselves, I think, with perfect clearness and distinctness, and the effort to confuse their views and to suggest that because one said something at one time and another said something at another time, therefore, as the noble Lord, Earl Beauchamp, said, we have at last admitted that Mr. Chamberlain's views are really the views of His Majesty's Government. Nothing could be more unjust.

I must suggest that so far as the debate has been conducted there is an air of unreality about it. We are not really discussing the question which was brought forward by the noble Lord. The noble Lord who has just sat down is a perfect master of rhetoric in regard to statistics and all other things that thereby hang. What has he been discussing for the last twenty minutes? I see an air of protest on his face. I will not say it was for such a long time or that it was an unreasonably long time. He has been discussing the question of fiscal preference. Is that the question we are now upon? Is it relative to the question we are now upon? I venture to say that it has nothing whatever to do with it. Let us turn to what the noble Lord who is responsible for bringing this Motion before the House suggests. What he has said is intelligible. I may not agree with him, but he is intelligible. He has called attention to the declarations of certain of His Majesty's Ministers concerning the proposed Colonial Conference. May I observe in passing that it is His Majesty's Ministers and not Mr. Chamberlain whose declarations he discusses. Then he goes on to say—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary that before the constituencies of this country are asked to determine as to the desirability of such conference, they should be informed"—

on certain points. We have here a series of problems. The first is under what conditions the conference will be summoned. Why should the constituencies be informed if they are to form a judgment on the conference. Why are we to say, now, what is to be said at the conference, or to pronounce a judgment beforehand, or say under what conditions it should be summoned? If my noble friend had propounded the question what conditions ought to be put forward before the Colonial Conference is summoned it would have been properly discussed. That is not the question. It is that the constituencies should be informed, and that is a totally different matter.

Then the noble Lord asks, "What Colonies and dependencies will be invited to send representatives?" The question of how many is a question of detail. The Crown Colonies and the others will be summoned, and I do not suppose that my noble friend really believes we should exclude anybody. Then we come to this question, "How far any decision arrived at will be held as binding upon His Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom?" In the first place observe what that means. Is the conference to come to any decision? Has anybody suggested that they are to decide anything? And if they were, has anybody suggested that it should be binding on the United Kingdom? With all respect to my noble friend I think that this proposition on the face of it is absurd. My noble friend appears to suggest that there is to be a sort of decision, as if we were submitting to an arbitration and award something that was to be binding for all time. Nothing can be more inconsistent with the idea of a Colonial Conference. Then what is the real question? I do not hesitate to say what it appears to me to be. Suppose, what the most determined free-traders will admit, that a commercial treaty is within the limits of their political economy and that a treaty with a foreign nation were in debate. Would it be considered right to begin by saying that you would not allow discussion upon this or that matter. I do not think that would be the method in which you would begin to treat with a foreign nation if you were proposing a commercial treaty.

There is a question which I have over and over again heard propounded both in this House and elsewhere, What are the Colonies going to give? You do not know what they are going to give. The Colonial Conference will tell us, and are we to shut that out and prevent there being a Colonial Conference which would enable us to understand what they are desirous or willing to do I observe that my noble friend who brought forward this Motion said that every light that can be given should be given in this Colonial Conference. Why should that not be? Why are you to put something like a restriction upon discussion and say "You may come here and tell us what you like, but observe that upon A., B., or C. we will have no discussion with you at all." I should think that if you wish to treat your Colonies as one foreign Minister would treat another foreign Minister in discussing anything in the nature of a commercial treaty, the very thing we should do is to say, "Let us freely converse with each other and see what we can agree upon."

I will not be tempted into a discussion of the colonial preference question or of the extent to which we or the Colonies might be benefited. It seems to me that that would be falling into the trap described by Earl Crewe of discussing on an indirect Motion in this House what we have refused to discuss, because until His Majesty's Ministers have proposed something and propounded some policy—which they have undertaken they will not do until the constituencies have been consulted—there is no reason why that question should be discussed. When it comes before the country it will be discussed no doubt. This is a counterfeit debate, because advantage has been taken of my noble friend's proposition to bring into this question matters that do not properly arise. I will not proceed to discuss what the free-traders contend, that protective countries are able to prosper and get more advantage for all their citizens because they have a wider field over which they may have free exchange of commodities. I am not going to discuss whether that is true or not. All I can say is that if it be true the question of bringing the British Empire, by excluding foreigners, into that wider field of international communication and free exchange of commercial products is one of the very questions which the Colonial Conference will probably discuss. In order that they may discuss it, you ought to allow them perfect freedom in discussion, and that which my noble friend desires, the greatest light you can have, is a light not to be given grudgingly or sparingly, but is to be obtained by allowing them to discuss all questions with freedom, so that the free expression of the colonial views may be obtained.

*Lord JAMES of HEREFORD: My Lords, after the somewhat remarkable speech just addressed to us by the noble Lord on the Woolsack, I must ask your permission to recall your attention to what is the object of this Motion. I think I can answer for my noble friend Lord Balfour, at least I can speak confidently for myself, that the intention of this Motion is not to oppose the conference. It is to show our anxiety that the conference, when it meets, should be the result of statesmanship and not be a conference moved by Party action. A member of the Cabinet lately told us that one move in the game of Party life had to be met by another.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Who was that?

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Mr. Gerald Balfour. My Lords, I do trust that this conference will not be made the subject of any Party move, and I do trust that we shall all, if a conference is to take place, unite in endeavouring to see that it shall be a practical conference for the benefit of the whole Empire. My noble friend on the Woolsack has given us a little lesson upon the manner in which our debates should be conducted. He has told us this is a sham debate, but he cannot include my noble friend Lord Burleigh in that charge. It was someone who came after him who entered into the question of the advantages of preference. Who was that? It is very hard that my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies should be told by a colleague of such weight and authority in this House that his eloquent advocacy of preference and the advantage of it to the nation was a sham and a pretence, and was something that was done under the guise of supporting or opposing my noble friend for the purpose of misleading this House. It is hard indeed that after we heard a speech so full of ability as the speech made by my noble friend the Duke of Marlborough, that one whom we ought to regard as his mentor should tell him he had been leading the House astray. My noble friend the Lord Chancellor has said why should these people who are mentioned by Lord Balfour—the electorate—be told what are the views His Majesty's Government take upon this subject.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I never said that.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I beg the noble Lord's pardon. I understood that he said so.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I said, Why should they be informed beforehand on what conditions the conference should be called?

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: That is exactly what I intended to convey, and I will now tell my noble and learned friend why the electorate should be informed. Of course if you are going to deal with the question as an abstract question there is no reason why you should inform the electorate, but why are you going to consult them and to ask them to say "Aye or no, will you have a conference," and yet not tell them what that conference is to represent. Let there be no doubt on this subject. The Government contains many able men, and there is one who is recognised by the public as a Minister, who, in relation to this fiscal subject, has shown great ability. I mean Mr. Bonar Law. He has told us what is going to take place. He said that the position was that the issue at the next general election was a simple one, whether the people desired a dear or a cheap loaf. The issue was really more than that. It was whether the electors were willing, without committing themselves to anything, to hold a Colonial Conference to consider whether preferential trade was practicable and whether it could be obtained without injury to the nation. No member of the Government has repudiated that. Now you are going to consult the electorate. The issue to be submitted to the people is a very important one and they are to say "Yes or no." Is it fair to that electorate, without telling them what the conference is for? Every candidate upon the hustings will give a different idea of the conference. Free-traders will give one idea, the Government candidate will give his view and, *pace* my noble friend, the persons who represent tariff reform will give another. Is that a fair way of obtaining a mandate from the people? Is it fair to ask the electors to bear the responsibility of saying whether this conference is to be held or not and yet refuse to tell them what are to be the duties, powers and results of the conference? This will place the country in a ridiculous position. Cannot the Government tell the people what they will be voting for if they vote for this conference? We are asking not that there should be detailed particulars, but that there should be some general explanation of what this conference means. We ask no more, but we say that this is necessary.

If by giving this information to the electors the Colonies learn our intentions regarding the conditions under which this country is prepared to enter into the conference, I do not think there will be any great evil in being so frank with our fellow-subjects. I will tell the House what will be a greater evil. It will be to bring the representatives of the Colonies here under false pretences. We know pretty well their views. We may anticipate that they will accept what has been stated by many statesmen in this country, that a preferential tariff with the Colonies must impose and will impose a tax upon food. That I think is admitted. More than one leading man who supports tariff reform has said, "If you cannot agree to a tax on food do not talk about a preferential tariff and do not ask for a conference at all." If you are going to ask the electorate to give an answer that must be sent to the Colonies, the answer given by the electorate would be our credentials for the calling of a conference, but the Colonies will ask "What conference are you in favour of? Are you going to give us a preferential tariff?" We shall have to say "No, we cannot tell you whether we are or not, because the Government, led by a great lawyer, asked in advance, 'What business have you to tell the electorate whether they are to agree to taxation of food or not?' and have intentionally kept them in the dark and have intentionally prevented them from making such a declaration."

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The Prime Minister has repeatedly stated that he is not in favour of the protective taxation of food.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I congratulate the noble Duke on making that statement. Now we have obtained the vindication of this debate. Let those words be well noted.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I beg my noble friend's pardon. The Prime Minister has stated that in the House of Commons on several occasions.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I am very glad to hear that. Some of us do not quite understand the Prime Minister's utterances. Now I understand, whether the Prime Minister has stated it or not, on the authority of the Minister who has led in this debate on the part of the Government, that the question of taxation of food is to be barred.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: My noble friend is under a misapprehension. I simply stated to him that the Prime Minister has repeatedly declared in the House of Commons that he is not in favour of the protective taxation of food.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Well, I will of course accept that statement. We are discussing to-night the question of the conference, and the noble Duke himself has introduced this subject. I treasure the noble Duke's words, because if the Prime Minister is not in favour of the protective taxation of food I am sure he will not let the conference overrule his views. That statement brings me now to the Question on the Paper. We are to have this conference, and I presume that it will be a special conference and not an *ad hoc* conference. Now that we have to summon this conference I ask who is to take part in it on behalf of this country? Of course, I assume that the present Government will be in office. They will have to nominate delegates with or without instructions, *ad referendum* or not. I take it they are to be selected by the Government and that they will be statesmen of their own thought. Who will they be? If they be my right hon. friend Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, and my noble friend the Duke of Marlborough as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, we shall know, after the speech of the noble Duke to-night, that this country will be represented by two men who are distinctly in favour of a Government which supports a preferential tariff.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am very sorry to interrupt the noble Lord, but he will be quite unable to find in any statement I made to-night that I advocated protective taxation of food on behalf of this country in order to create a preferential agreement between us and our Colonies.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: That may be so, but the noble Duke was very eloquent in advocating a preference on something. There is nothing else but food to give a preference on. That is one view. But supposing the Prime Minister were to say, "The Colonial Office is very hardworked. I do not think that these Ministers can give sufficient attention to the onerous duties of the Conference and I will find two other Ministers instead." Suppose then he were to say: "There is the President of the Council. The friction of education has passed off and I think he will represent the country very well. Then there is another Minister who has not much work to do—the President of the Board of Trade. I will choose these two Ministers to represent this country at the conference." May I ask in that case would the same voices speak as would speak in the alternative case?

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY: The noble Lord alludes to me? I am surprised I have been drawn into this matter. As I differ from the views of Mr. Chamberlain and from those of the Duke of Devonshire, I should not give satisfaction to the views of either.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I beg my noble friend's pardon. I have only used the names of my noble friends for the purposes of illustration. What I am endeavouring to point out is this. Who is to represent the Government? It must be remembered that in representing the Government you must represent the people, and when we speak of representing the people we mean those electors who at the next election must avowedly give a decision upon this subject, and that decision will have to be represented by someone who must be in accordance with the views of those they represent.

Let us now ask what are the instructions for the men who will go into that conference. What are they to discuss? Those who will represent the Colonies will come here, every one of them with positive instructions to support a certain policy of preference that should give some benefit to the Colonies. Are our representatives to have instructions? if so, what are they to be? Is it not fair that those who at the next general election are to say "Yes or no" to the conference, should be told what are to be the instructions of their representatives when they go into the conference? I think I could almost make a bargain with the Secretary for Foreign Affairs and with the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. Will they say when they go to the electorate with the issue of conference or no conference that they will undertake that those who should represent the electors should not commit them to the taxation of food? If you do not say that you do not make it clear to the electorate what they are going to determine upon. If you will make it clear, I should be satisfied, because I think I know what the determination of the electorate will be.

There is another question. What is to be the result of this conference? Is the majority of the conference to prevail? If the colonial delegates are agreed in favour of preference, will our delegates have to say, "We agree with you here, but we do not know what our principals, the Government will say. We should have to go back and ask their views?" Then perhaps the British representatives will return to the Colonies and have to say, "Although we have brought you here to discuss this matter, and although you are all agreed on preference, and we are agreed upon it, we cannot go with you, because the Government will not allow us to ratify the decision arrived at." My Lords, you who have been appealed to on behalf of this great Empire and our Colonial Empire, what will be the effect of a decision if you have power given to summon a conference under such conditions? A great deal more can be said upon this question and I have some anxiety upon it, because I believe that some use is going to be made of this conference that we do not quite understand.

I must refer for a moment to a matter that has affected a Party to which I am proud to belong, a Party which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs assisted in forming some nineteen years ago. We were lately captured as an independent Party and the Liberal Unionist Party was said to be reformed. An authentic circular was issued asking every Liberal Unionist to sign his name to a certain policy. The second article of this policy was "Closer union with the Colonies on the basis of preferential tariffs." We know what that meant. Those who issued the document admitted it meant taxation of food. Correspondence took place, but I do not wish to refer to it at all, beyond saying that public attention was called to the circular by a Member for a Division of Lancashire. It was said that taxation of food was not quite consistent with the views of Unionists and so a change had to be made, and I find that in February the phrase in the earlier circular was altered to "Closer union with the Colonies on a mutually satisfactory basis which it is hoped may be settled at the forthcoming Colonial Conference." That is only the old faith in a new garb, and I hope the Lord Chancellor will not be angry with me when I say that I am afraid that it is possible that this conference may be used for the purpose of carrying out the original purpose, namely, the taxation of food. I hope it will not be so. I hope there will be men like the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs who will have power to control their Party, so that this conference shall not be used for the purposes of carrying out a Party struggle at home and that the Colonists shall not find when they come here that they are carrying out the protectionist policy of the newly-founded Liberal Unionist Party.

My Lords, I have to apologise for the length at which I have spoken. If I have detained you too long, I have done so because of the strong opinions I entertain on the subject. I appeal to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He and I fought together to establish a Party which we believed to be a Liberal Party, Liberal in every respect. That Party never admitted that any interest had the right to render itself powerful or wealthy at the expense of others. We clung to the old doctrines of the Liberal Party, and, at any rate, we knew nothing of this sad business of protection. Can the noble Marquess look upon that Party as it is now and be satisfied with its condition? Can he hope that it will spring into its strength again with the true feelings that pervaded it twenty years ago? If there be any want of frankness in dealing with the electors of this country and it be intended by dialectical skill not to present the truth to our fellow-countrymen still greater disasters will follow and I ask my noble friend to make it his care to avert such a calamity by dealing with full frankness with those to whom an appeal is about to be made.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I wish that it was not my duty to rise to offer a few remarks at this stage of the debate. I should like to have left the speech which my noble and learned friend has just made, fresh and without any speech following it, to be answered by the noble Marquess to whom he made such an appeal. But I am afraid this is the only opportunity I shall have of saying a few words as representing the Opposition in your Lordships' House. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has complained that the general question of fiscal policy should have been brought into this debate, and that the exact terms of the Motion should have been overpassed. I do not think it would be possible to confine the debate actually to the mere question of the conference. For what depends on the conference? The whole question of preference, and that again depends on what is more important still—the taxation of food. How is it possible not to touch on these vital questions?

I am certainly not opposed to conferences. I believe they play a very important part in the affairs of the world and in the affairs of this kingdom. There have been several conferences, and they have been all most useful in bringing together the leaders of politics in this country and the Prime Ministers of the Colonies. I attach immense importance to them. The Reports are exceedingly instructive and very valuable documents, representing extremely moderate views. The Colonies are quite capable of giving credit to this country for generosity, and at the same time of putting themselves in our place and acknowledging the difficulty we should have in dealing with this question of preference. At the Conference of 1902 there were no fewer than eighteen subjects discussed, and among them this question of preference. But when you come to a subject which has divided and almost broken up a Government, and which occupies the attention of the whole country, is it possible that a conference should be called, in order, as numbers of people in this country suppose, to decide preference and the taxation of food?

The Prime Minister and other Ministers have made a great many varying statements on this question, and I am not going to disentangle the knot that has been tied. But I wish most strongly and distinctly to point out that you will only confuse the issue before the constituencies if you refer this question of a conference to them. People outside think that the question is simply whether there is to be a conference or not. They do not understand. That such a conference should be perfectly free and unfettered is, in my opinion, perfectly impossible. Will the representatives of the Colonies come to the conference free and unfettered? Every one of them will have his instructions; and is it right that this country should be represented at the conference without distinct and clear instructions being given as to how the proceedings are to be carried out? I am convinced that it is essential that there should be no ambiguity about this among the electors of this country. We cannot at present be clear as to what the Prime Minister and the Government desire. That state of things must be put an end to as soon as possible.

The question to be put to the country is, Are you in favour of the taxation of food and protective duties in order to secure preference? The speech of the noble Duke went a long way, not towards the taxation of food, perhaps, but towards having a fixed tariff on manufactured articles. That must be clearly put before the constituencies. When they have given their opinion, then it will be easy to deal with the conference. The conference is not summoned by Act of Parliament or by the constituencies. The principles being decided by the votes of the constituencies then it will be for the Government in office to decide upon the terms of the conference. I quite agree with what has been said that if the colonial representatives are called over here in the belief that they will have perfectly free and unfettered power of discussion, and then find that they cannot discuss the taxation of food, which is and must be involved in the question of preference, then I think it may be said you will have deceived them, or, at least, treated them unfairly. Let the question be put in a straightforward manner to the constituencies, and then do as you like about a conference. I have nothing further to add, and if my noble friend carries his Motion to a division I shall vote for it.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the noble Earl has set a good example by confining his observations to the subject of the conference. We have been taunted during the course of the debate with expressing ideas which have been described as nebulous on this subject; but I confess that, after listening to the speeches of our critics, I do not find their criticism so clearly and sharply defined as I could wish, and certainly many of them have left us in doubt whether they desire a conference to meet at all or not. But I take it from the speeches of the noble Earl and of the noble and learned Lord behind me that they do desire a conference to assemble, and I accept the statement without the slightest reservation. I cannot, however, help remembering that not very long ago the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons publicly stated his opinion that the policy of a conference was ridiculous, and that he went on to say that the conference was, in his opinion, a trick and had for its object, not the consolidation of the Empire, but the consolidation of the Unionist Party. I hear that statement cheered, but it was not found in the speech of the noble Earl, nor in those of any of the speakers on the benches opposite, and I hope those cheers do not represent the real opinion there. If they do we cannot acquit them of insincerity in the remarks they have addressed to us.

Our critics, then, desire that this Conference should meet, but they are extremely anxious to deny to it the opportunity of affording us any useful knowledge on the subject which, above all things, the conference will have to consider.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: May I ask the noble Marquess what that is?

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: I will tell my noble friend in one moment if he will possess his soul in patience. This conference, if it meets, will be the fourth, the others having been held in 1887,1897, and 1902. I am not at this late hour going to pass in review the proceedings of these earlier meetings; but I shall not be misrepresenting them when I say that each showed a very distinct advance on its predecessor, and that at each the proceedings came to resemble less and less those of a debating society and more and more the deliberations of a great Imperial council. Each conference addressed itself more closely than its predecessor to the subject which I conceive was the most interesting of those before it—the possibility of improving the commercial relations between the mother country and the Colonies. That subject was certainly discussed at the conference in 1897, which, the noble Earl will remember, followed closely on a meeting of Australian Premiers, when the question of closer commercial arrangements came up for discussion: and, as for the conference of 1902, I need not recall to your Lordships the Resolution passed by it and the desire then expressed for another meeting in four years. I venture to say that the Colonies that took part in the conference of 1902 must have felt when they looked forward to reassembling in 1906 that their representatives would be in a position to resume the task on which they had been occupied, and certainly not with a less degree of freedom than had hitherto been afforded them. Well, I ask your Lordships, would it not be something like a farce to invite the Colonies to send their best, their most representative, statesmen here, and then to tell them that they have not the right to discuss a question they had already discussed at a former conference? My noble and learned friend has spoken of obtaining the presence of these colonial representatives on false pretences; but I say it will be a false pretence to ask them to come here and then tell them they are out of order if they discuss the question of closer commercial relations.

What are noble Lords afraid of? Why are they so anxious to circumscribe the proceedings of the conference? Are they afraid that the Colonies will rush us into some extravagant proposal disastrous to the commercial welfare of this country? Are they afraid that the Government of the day will allow itself to be rushed into such a proposal? I will venture to express the opinion that each side is perfectly well aware, without precise instructions, that there are certain limitations beyond which neither side can make concessions to the other. I may say to your Lordships frankly that, in my opinion, it is idle to expect that the Colonies will agree to any changes in their fiscal system which will have the effect of wiping out of existence those home industries which they have expended so much enterprise and energy in building up. On the other hand it is perfectly well known that we are not likely to listen to any proposals which might have the effect of materially increasing the price of food to the people of this country or of cutting off the supply of raw material upon which they so much depend for their industry. These limitations are perfectly understood; and I do not think you will gain anything by an attempt to fetter the Conference in such a way as to preclude them from discussing any questions verging on either of these points.

What, I take it, the conference will have to do will be to consider whether within these limitations it is not possible to devise some mutually advantageous arrangement which might have beneficial effects upon the commerce of the Empire as a whole. The problem may be a difficult one. All that we ask is that the conference should be allowed to try to solve it. But, if the criticisms to which we have listened to-night are to prevail, we are not to be allowed even to make the effort. These questions will be ruled out of order. You are to get your delegates together and lay down hard-and-fast limits which they are on no account to exceed. The noble Duke on the bench below the gangway (the Duke of Devonshire) has not addressed to us any observations to-night; but he made a most interesting speech last night; and, although I will not quote it at length, I desire to refer to a single sentence which seems to me to show how completely he and others have misapprehended the spirit in which this conference is to be approached. The noble Duke expressed his sympathy with our desire to unite more closely the Empire by bonds of interest, as well as of sentiment; but he went on to say—

> "Here, also, we are unfortunately compelled to differ diametrically from them."

And he represented us as asking the Colonies to make changes in their system which they are unwilling to make in return for concessions which would be burdensome and therefore distasteful to our own people. We have no idea of asking the Colonies to make changes which they are unwilling to make, nor have we any desire of imposing on our people sacrifices which are distasteful to them. Our desire is that the two sides should come together and endeavour to devise some solution of the difficulty, which should be in accordance with the inclination both of the mother country and of the Colonies. If we succeed in our endeavour—if some arrangement can be made acceptable to the Colonies and acceptable to this country and to the people of this country—there will be every reason to rejoice. If we fail we shall, at any rate, have tried our best, and the conference will separate feeling that all has been done that is possible.

We are asked, why is it necessary that the constituencies should give a mandate for this purpose? My Lords, surely those who take part in the conference will approach their task in a very different spirit and under very different conditions if they know that what they are doing is in accordance with the wish and general policy of the people of this country.

My noble friend Lord Lytton asked me what would happen supposing we were still in office next year and the conference therefore met before the constituencies had given their mandate. I am almost tempted to tell my noble friend that, if he will give me twelve months notice of the Question and I am here to answer it, I will give him full information. I will now give him an interim Answer which will perhaps content him. I should say that in that case the conference would meet all the same; and that there would be plenty of useful work for it to do; and I see no reason why it should not, even in that case, address itself to the question of commercial relations. But there would be all the difference in the world between discussions of that subject after the constituencies had given their mandate and discussions when the delegates to the conference did not know whether the people of this country are or are not in favour of a change.

We are asked whether the decisions of the conference would be binding on the Government and the people of this country. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has already protested against the idea that a conference of this kind can give a decision. The business of the conference is to report and advise, and obviously that decision is not and cannot be of itself a binding decision upon anybody. Those who take part in it are delegates; they are not plenipotentiaries. My noble and learned friend asked me a series of questions as to the constitution of the conference, what members of the Government would represent us, what instructions they would have, and, I think, he even wished to be told how the votes would be taken. These are matters of detail which, no doubt, can be dealt with and discussed at the time; but we are certainly not going, before the appeal to the constituencies has been made, and long before the conference has met, to commit ourselves as to all details of the procedure to be followed.

I should like to ask your Lordships to consider for one moment what would happen supposing the advice of noble Lords opposite were taken and elaborate and restrictive instructions were given to the members of the conference.

What would these instructions be? I take it, if noble Lords opposite had their own way, it would be intimated to the delegates that they were not authorised to discuss any proposals involving protection. On that at once arises the question, what is protection? The noble Marquess (Lord Ripon) laughs. Does he not remember that a few nights ago in this House we had a reference to India as a free-trade country, in spite of the fact that, as we all know, India has a 5 per cent, all-round tariff upon its imports? Has the noble Lord forgotten that there has been a controversy whether a shilling duty on corn was or was not a protective tax? I am rather under the impression that of two successive Chancellors of the Exchequer, both of the same way of thinking as my noble and learned friend behind me on that subject, one maintained that the shilling duty was, and the other that it was not, protection.

Then I suppose another standing order will be that no proposals for the taxation of food will be in order. But we tax food now; and will it be out of order to consider whether, as a certain amount of revenue is now derived from the taxation of food, those taxes may not be adjusted in such a way as to facilitate trade between the mother country and her great dependencies beyond the seas? I venture to suggest to the House that any attempt to hamper the conference by minute instructions on such points as these could only lead to very undignified and very infructuose discussions. I am reminded of a famous conference described by an American humourist at which a point of order was raised by a gentleman present with unfortunate results to himself—the result being that "the subsequent proceedings interested him no more"—and I am afraid that if points of this kind were to be discussed at the conference the subsequent proceedings would indeed cease to be interesting to many of those taking part in them.

It is our desire that there should be no limitations of this kind upon these discussions; that, on the contrary, the discussions should be conducted with the most complete freedom; and, that they should extend to all the aspects not only the economical, but the political, aspects of the case. If such discussions are to be of use, we must trust the Colonies to avail themselves in a reasonable spirit of the opportunity which we are offering to them. We must ourselves approach these discussions with an open mind, and with the feeling that the country is behind us. What strikes me is that noble Lords opposite have approached this question with a feeling of general mistrust of everybody concerned. That they should mistrust His Majesty's Government may be, perhaps, from their point of view, natural; but I do not know why they should extend that mistrust to the Colonies, or to the Parliament, or the people of this country, because that is what it comes to.

I desire, before I sit down, to notice one observation of the noble mover's, which I heard with some regret; he made it in the course of the very eloquent and animated peroration with which he ended his speech. He told your Lordships that in his view it was to the tie of sentiment to which we ought to look if we desired to maintain the unity of the Empire, and I do not think I misquote him when I say that he referred to the commercial tie as being one of a baser kind. I desire to raise my voice against the suggestion that there is anything base or sordid in the desire of the people of this country and of the Colonies to increase and foster Imperial trade. I believe, on the contrary, that the commercial tie is one of the soundest and healthiest ties by which a great community can be held together, and I for one rejoice that an effort should be made to increase the strength of that tie. Why, my Lords, in the office which I have the honour to fill at this moment, I am constantly brought into contact with the great Chambers of Commerce in this country, and with people who represent the trade of Great Britain in all parts of the world. Shall I be expected to tell them when they come to me that their interests are base and sordid interests? I am afraid we must oppose the Motion of my noble friend; his Motion has been described to us as a very innocent one; but without being unduly suspicious, I must express my general doubt as to the objects with which these ingeniously worded Motions are brought before Parliament. The drafting of these Resolutions has now become a fine art, and my noble friend has produced the latest effort of the kind. We cannot bind ourselves to any pledges beyond those which have already been given repeatedly, and with much distinctness, by the Prime Minister, and we desire that this conference should not be tied and fettered by detailed restrictions.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: In what way would my Resolution fetter the conference? It merely asks that the people of this country should be informed of the conditions. There is no question of fettering.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I understood the whole tenor of my noble friend's speech to be that he desired that the people of this country should have explained to them in detail what were the limits beyond which the inquiries of the conference should not go. If I am mistaken, perhaps the noble Lord will explain?

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I stand by the terms of the Motion.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Exactly, that confirms what I ventured to say a moment ago. These Motions are drafted with much ingenuity; it is impossible to understand their exact bearing until you hear the speeches by which they are explained, and I say that the speech in which this Motion was introduced shows that its object is to deprive the conference of that free and unrestricted opportunity which we desire it should have, and for that reason we shall certainly oppose the Motion.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: My Lords, for my part I think I may congratulate my noble friend Lord Balfour on the success which his Motion has had. I do not scruple to say that I think the speech of my noble friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, coupled with that of the noble Duke who answered the mover, on the whole very satisfactory. I think that we have received a great deal of most important information, which was not in our hands before. For one thing some light has been thrown on a point on which there was some doubt—namely, what was to be the position of the next conference if the Government should remain in power. We understand that then the conference, which would naturally be called next year, will not be a conference *ad hoc*—to discuss this most important question of fiscal changes, but will be an ordinary conference, and that it would be necessary to postpone to a further year the submission to this country, and to the inhabitants of the Colonies, of those great issues which have been brought before them.

I am glad to think that the matter is not so urgent as was represented to us a few years ago. In 1903 it was said that this country was on a decline, and that unless an almost immediate decision was come to on these questions the tie which binds us to the Colonies would be weakened. Now we know that next year there may be an ordinary conference, and that the summoning of the conference itself may be deferred to a future year, and then it would be to a *paulo-post-futurum* conference that the decision would ultimately be relegated. I am quite satisfied with that course of affairs. I never thought the matter was so urgent as was represented in the burning speeches we heard in 1903. I congratulate His Majesty's Government, I cordially agree with them in the position to which they have come, that all this talk about the urgency of the case was really exaggerated, and that we can calmly look forward to a sensible and quiet discussion with the Colonies of the great questions which have been raised. We are free now for some years as regards any urgency for recasting our whole fiscal system. I congratulate my noble friend Lord Balfour on having elicited the clearest expression—the renewed expression—of His Majesty's Government to the effect that no conference is to have any power to decide any of these questions before the matter is once more submitted to the constituencies.

The noble Lord the President of the Tariff Reform Commission, to whose speech we have all listened with great interest, expressed his profound disappointment at this renewed declaration of the Government, that there was not to be a conference which should decide anything, but only a conference which was to come to some conclusions which were afterwards to be submitted to another decision of the electorate. I cannot agree in the regret of the noble Lord. I rejoice that these great changes are to be considered deliberately and are not to be decided by a conference without a real appeal to the people of this country. This is clear, this is decided once for all, that it will only be after two elections that we shall have before us the questions which are to be submitted to the conference. I congratulate Lord Balfour of Burleigh on having obtained a clear declaration to the effect that the Prime Minister is opposed to the taxation of food.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: The protective taxation of food.

Viscount GOSCHEN: Does that include the two shillings? My noble friend does not answer. I understand that the Prime Minister is opposed to the taxation of food proposed by Mr. Chamberlain. If that is so, we have cleared the ground to a great extent, and I am not so anxious for any special instructions to be given to our representatives at the conference. If it is known by the Colonies when their representatives come here that the Prime Minister is opposed to the taxation of food, they have been advised of the general tendency of this country. Who will be chosen to represent this country at the conference is a matter on which we can scarcely expect the Government to be very explicit, although it is a matter of the deepest importance. I do not think they will commission Mr. Chamberlain to represent us at the conference. We know now that the Colonies have notice, from the words which have fallen from the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, that the Prime Minister is opposed to the taxation of food.

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: Protective taxation.

Viscount GOSCHEN: Will the noble Duke explain the difference?

The Duke of MARLBOROUGH No, indeed, I will not.

Viscount GOSCHEN: My position would be this. In the same way as we have been advised by the representatives of the Colonies that they are not prepared to make concessions to us in the way of lowering duties to admit our manufactures, so they have been advised that we are opposed to the taxation of food and raw materials. The two parties will meet with this notification to each other. If that is the case, I say I shall not demand or expect the Government to give any precise instructions to those who represent us at the conference. Noble Lords will excuse me if I say it, but I think we may congratulate ourselves upon four most able speeches that have been made this evening by some of the youngest Members of this House. It is a great advantage to the House that four such speeches should have been made as have been made by the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Beauchamp, Lord Lytton, and Lord Ridley, and I think the discussion has perhaps been in some respects more satisfactory than some of the much longer and more heated debates in another place. I think we have arrived at some better conclusions. It has been said, "The Colonies have made these offers to you, what are you going to give them in return? The Colonies have given you great advantages in preference; what will you do for them?" Well, I think there is one answer which this country can make to the Colonies, and that is this, "If on the one hand you have given us some preferences, and I value them ——" Let it be perfectly understood that I and many of those who act with me value them also. We value these preferences. We think that the Colonies have shown the best temper in the world in granting us these preferences, and for my part I am glad that a conference should be called in order to discuss the whole of this question. I do not associate myself with any of the observations which have been made which are derogatory to the calling of the conference. I rejoice in it; I think it is well. But what I was going to say was this. Do we do nothing for the Colonies while they have made concessions to us?

Words have been spoken to-night with regard to the various ties which bind us and the Colonies together. Some think that it is the ties of commerce which are to make the union between ourselves and our Colonies closer, and I trust if those ties are made they will bind us tight. Others have spoken of the ties of sentiment, which have acted in the past, which have acted during a time of severe pressure on this country, and which have proved that, without any commercial union with the Colonies, they were ready to come to our assistance, and to show how they associated themselves with Imperial questions before this question of commercial union had been raised. But there is another tie which binds us to the Colonies, the tie of common defence, the tie which consists in the fact that we put forward the whole power of this Empire, not only to defend our own shores, not only to defend our own commerce, but to defend our Colonies with as great an energy and determination that no colony shall be hurt by any foreign country as we exercise in protecting our own shores.

And what have we done in order to secure that that tie of common defence shall be carried out and strengthened to the advantage of the Colonies as well as of ourselves. We have doubled our military and naval expenditure. We have done all we can to put ourselves in a position to assist the Colonies and to defend them against the increasing power of foreign countries and against all the newer dangers which may threaten them. Is that nothing that we can take into the common fund of Imperial defence, of Imperial unity, of Imperial interests? The noble Duke spoke, and spoke with eloquence, of what Canada had done for us by increasing our trade with herself, and what an advantage this country has received. But think of the enormous increase of taxation which has been put upon this country, and this country alone, in order to defend not only ourselves, but the Empire at large. I think we may fairly put forward a claim to the Colonies that if they have given us some preferences, which we value, not only for the material advantage which has accrued, but for the spirit in which they have been given, we on our side also have made some contributions to the common interests of the Empire at large by the enormous accession of taxation which has been borne by this country. I think that is a fair plea that may be urged by our representatives, whoever they may be, in this conference, which I hope will conduce to the advantage both of this country and of the Colonies.

I think my noble friend has gained much by this debate. I have no exception to take to the speech which was made by the Leader of the House, and in those circumstances I cannot think that it would be advisable for him to divide the House on the Motion which he has set down. He has had an Answer to his Question, and if he were to carry the Motion, which perhaps we may doubt, I do not think that we should be any more forward than we are at the present moment. We should not be able to elicit any more information from His Majesty's Government. I think they have told us all we are likely to gain from them, and, therefore, I would venture to advise my noble friend—and in that I have the approval, I believe, of the Duke of Devonshire—not to push his Motion to a division.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, it will only be by the indulgence of the House that I intervene in this debate after the Leaders have spoken, and after the speech of Lord Goschen. I had no intention of doing so, but I claim your indulgence because I confess that, entering this House with a candid mind, I have been rather filled with suspicion from what has occurred in the course of the debate. In regard to this Question of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's, I occupy a somewhat different position from any of those represented in the speeches to which we have listened. As I read it, I thought it a somewhat academical Question, academical in more senses than one. One sense, I am afraid, may seem somewhat offensive to the Front Bench opposite; but I thought it academical in this sense, that I do not think, so far as I can gather from the symptoms that have appeared in the country, that it is very likely that they will be called upon after the next general election to summon a Colonial Conference, and, therefore, I confess there is an air of unreality in discussing the question of what His Majesty's present Government will do after the next general election is decided.

Well, it is also academical in another sense. It asks a number of Questions which are irreproachable in their nature and contents, and, therefore, it does not seem necessary to vote on the propositions laid down in the Motion. But I was glad to hear that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack took much the same view as I am taking. He said, as I understood him, that there were conditions as to which no debate could arise. I am not often fortunate enough to be in harmony with the noble and learned Lord; but on this occasion I find myself in agreement with him. What are these Questions from which I am afraid we have departed under the leadership of the noble Duke? And let me congratulate him that, among the many promising speeches delivered by Peers of a younger generation, he should have delivered a speech which has enabled him to occupy the unique position of having sprung in a single night to be hailed as the leader and mouthpiece of the great Conservative Party and of the Government of which he is as yet nominally only a subordinate member. But what are the Questions from which we have departed so much under his leadership?

"Under what conditions will the conference be summoned?"

I understand from what has been said that it will be summoned on the conditions of free speech.

"What Colonies and dependencies will be invited to send representatives?"

That is a question which may be left to the future. It is not a question really of such great importance as it seems to be on the Paper.

"How far will any decision arrived at be held as binding upon His Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom?"

It is quite clear that no decision of a Colonial Conference can be held as binding on the United Kingdom without the consent and approval of Parliament. Therefore I say that these Questions were in their nature academic. They have raised a very interesting discussion. We have had various avowals, chiefly, I think, from the noble Duke, sustained by a somewhat dubious silence on the part of his colleagues; and we have had a sort of catechetical speech from the noble and learned Lord opposite, who seemed to bring the whole Front Bench opposite, one after another, on to their legs to answer the Questions which he put. But that is not business in the true sense of the word. It is academic. It rests for foundation on the existence of the present Government after the general election, and it rests on their ability to answer some general Questions which they find no difficulty in answering in the way that Governments generally answer Questions.

Why is it that I feel called upon to intervene in this debate when I have regarded it as somewhat academic from the commencement? I will tell you in a sentence. The whole of this conference has had a sinister career. In the ordinary course of things, with a four years' limit, an ordinary conference would be called in 1906. Well, what was the origin of this conference? We were told in 1903 that it was a vital crisis to the Empire; that it was a question of now or never; that we were refusing an offer which was like the Sibylline books, and would be shortly withdrawn. We were plunged into an agony of expectation as to what was to happen next to the Empire which hitherto had seemed so united. The last conference had only been a year before. We asked in vain what had occurred in the eight months since the separation of that conference and the middle of May, 1903, that it should be proclaimed that the Empire was in danger. Then we had alarms and excursions for fifteen months more. Then we came to a moment on which Lord Balfour laid very insufficient stress. Indeed, he went out of his way to say that he passed it by altogether. It was the Answer of the Prime Minister in August of last year to the Question whether he was going to call a Colonial Conference. To that question the Prime Minister replied that he had no idea of the kind. But two months afterwards he hurriedly summoned a meeting at Edinburgh, and called his friends round him, to announce that he had discovered a great new policy which had apparently occurred to no one else before—that of summoning a Colonial Conference at the earliest possible date. When you consider all that had passed, when you consider the Answer which the Prime Minister had given in August, when you pass on to the statement that he made in October, I ask, is the statement of my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition in the other House, to which the noble Marquess alluded with such contumely—I ask, is the statement overcharged, that this conference was called, not to unite the British Empire, but to unite the Conservative Party?

That is the origin of this Conference. The attempt is now made to convert it into the battle-cry of a general election. I do not believe, even if the Government had been more ingenuous and more diffuse in their explanations to night than they have been, that there is any chance of that conference being a substantial issue at the next general election; and, therefore, from my point of view, all this has been academic. The history of the conference has been sinister. It is not a candid proposition that has been laid before the country. It is not an open policy. It is our old friend the red herring drawn across the inconvenient path of the erratic Member for West Birmingham. But if this be academic, how does it fit in with the sinister position of this policy? I say that the propositions laid down in the Motion of the noble Lord are so innocent that, if the Government were sincere in their policy, if they merely desired an open conference of the kind that they have so frequently described, they could not raise a finger in opposition to the Motion. "But, ah!" says the noble Marquess, with that perspicuity and that nose for the suspicious which has made him so great an authority in foreign affairs—"Ah," says he, "the Motion is nothing. These Motions are made out as traps for the unwary. I do not look at the Motion. Perish the Motion! What I look at is the dangerous, the misleading, the casuistical speech of my noble friend Lord Balfour."

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: I did not make use of those epithets.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: No; the noble Marquess did not. I put in the epithets; I enriched his vocabulary. But they were all in his voice and in his intonation, though they were not in his speech. But now I come to the final question, which alone has brought me to my feet, and no speech is needed in answer to it. Why, if it is against the speech of Lord Balfour that the Government are going to vote to-night, did they direct the issue of a three-lined Whip three days before that speech was spoken?

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: I ask the permission of the House to withdraw the Motion.

Permission for leave to withdraw the said Motion having been refused.

On Question; resolved in the negative.

House adjourned at ten minutes past Eleven o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 11th April, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Hessle Gas Bill [Lords]; Marylebone Chapels Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]; Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, introduced in accordance with the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Croydon Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

McConnell's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Read a second time; and committed.

Woolwich Borough Council Bill (by Order). As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill. "To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bury (Rural), Conway; Goldborne; Haydock; Hipperholme; Little Lever; Southall-Norwood; Spalding; Whitwood; and Whitworth;" presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 160.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Ballaghaderreen," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 161.]

Halifax Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Stockport Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section A]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bristol Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee [Section B]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee;

1. "That, in the case of the Worcestershire County Council (Bridges), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill.

2. "That, in the case of the Levens Patent Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill.

3. "That, in the case of the Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Portadown Urban District Council,' against the Bill, recommitted Resolution of the 6th day of April, referred to the said Select Committee with a view to consider whether, under the circumstances of the case, Standing Order 128 should be dispensed with in respect of the said Petition, the said Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First two Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the periods prescribed by the scheme of arrangement relating to the Mortgage Insurance Corporation, Limited, for the liquidation of their affairs; and for other purposes." [Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to effect a fusion of the undertaking of the Hand-in-Hand Fire and Life Insurance Society with that of the Commercial Union Assurance Company, Limited; and for other purposes." [Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Urban District Council of Clacton in regard to the Seashore Recreation Grounds and other matters; and to make further and better provisions in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of their district: and for other purposes." [Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Truro Water Company to construct additional waterworks, acquire lands, and raise further moneys; and for other purposes." [Truro Water Bill [Lords.]

Mortgage Insurance Corporation Bill [Lords]; Commercial Union Assurance Bill [Lords]; Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Truro Water Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY.

Petition from Glasgow, against isolation from the other regiments of the Highland Brigade; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Bellshill; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Perth; and Troon; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Clevedon; Folkestone; Holyhead; Kingston-on Thames; Lewisham; Lincoln; and North Kensington; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COAL IMPORTS (FRANCE).

Return [presented 10th April] to be printed. [No. 121.]

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a Licence granted to James Smith, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 446 (St. Vincent) Annual Report for 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (TRADE).

Copy presented, of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1899–1900 to 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.

Annual Accounts presented, of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st December, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish National School Teachers.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a statement made in the House on April 18th, 1904,† by his predecessor in reference to national teachers being at the absolute mercy of the managers; whether he has recently been appealed to by Protestant teachers for redress; and, if so, what steps, if any, does he intend taking to remove the alleged grievances.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxiii., 436.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have read the statement referred to. I have not yet received the appeal mentioned, but will give it careful consideration when received. The matter appears to be one very largely for the managers and teachers to settle between themselves. The Commissioners of National Education provide certain forms of agreement for execution between managers and teachers; and they cannot further intervene.

Railway Rates for Carriage of Fish from North of Scotland.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he can see his way to communicate with the railway companies concerned with a view to secure a reduction in the through rates charged for the carriage of fish from the North of Scotland to the southern markets.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am sorry that I can only refer the hon. Member to the Answer I gave to a similar Question on February 27th.†

Port Ness Harbour.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate, in view of the fact that the harbour and breakwater at Port Ness, Island of Lewis, are in such a condition as not to warrant the expenditure requisite to render the harbour of service to the fishermen, will he state whether Messrs. D. and T. Stevenson, by whom the plans for this harbour were prepared, are still employed by the Scottish Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) There are no harbour works at present in progress under the superintendence of the Scottish Office which require the employment of a professional firm of civil engineers.

Education of Children of Tinker Families in Scotland.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate, having regard to the fact that a number of children of school age, belonging to tinker families in Scotland, receive no education whatever, will he state whether he can see his way to so amend the Education (Scotland) Bill now before Parliament as to secure to these children the benefits of education.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) This matter is one of great difficulty, which has received and is still receiving most careful consideration.

Waveney School, Ballymena.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Waveney School in Ballymena has been in operation in temporary premises since August, 1903, and has been reported upon by the sub-inspector in November, 1904, by a chief inspector in May, 1904, and by another chief inspector in December, 1904; will he state when and by whom the Waveney School temporary premises were reported as unsuitable and insanitary; and when was intimation to that effect first given to the manager of the Waveney School.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Waveney applicant school, Ballymena, has been in operation in temporary premises since August, 1903. The application for aid was reported on by the local inspector in December, 1903, and by the Board's two chief inspectors in May, 1904, and December, 1904, respectively. In the May report of the chief inspector it was stated that the premises were unsuitable, that there was no playground, and that there was very insufficient out-office accommodation. The chief inspector who visited in December reported, in addition to the foregoing defects, that he found children crowded into a room of cramped dimensions (19 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 8 inches by 10 feet) and that the air in this room was very much vitiated and dangerous to the health of teachers and pupils. The Commissioners are satisfied that this school is not required, and they have so informed the applicant on several occasions. In replying on March 6th last to a letter from the applicant, in which temporary recognition of the school was sought for, the Commissioners, while refusing such recognition on the grounds that the school was not required, stated as an additional reason for not aiding the school, even temporarily, that the premises were unsuitable and insanitary.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 1321.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that when the chief inspector visited the Waveney School, Ballymena, in December, 1904, there were 149 pupils on the roll, of these ninety-eight being infants, and forty-eight of them had never attended any other school in Ballymena; that the remaining fifty infants were withdrawn from the following:—Guy's Infants (35), Model Infants (10), Harryville Girls (5); and if he will state what available accommodation exists in these schools, allowing ten square feet per pupil.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) When the Board's chief inspector visited the Waveney applicant school, Ballymena, in December last, he found 149 pupils on rolls, 91 of whom were under eight years of age. The chief inspector reported that of the pupils on rolls only 33, all infants, had not been at school before, and that the remaining 116 had been withdrawn from the following school—

Schools.	Number withdrawn.	Accommodation at 10 square feet per pupil.	Average.
Model Schools - - -	27	375	167
Guy's Schools - - - -	57	422	401
Harryville - - - -	6	448	414
Ballymoney Street - - -	4	193	94
Other National Schools outside Ballymena - - -	22	—	—

The following tabular statement shows the average attendance and the accommodation at nine and ten square feet per pupil at the Model Infants, Guy's Infants, and Harryville Girls National Schools. An allowance of nine square feet for each pupil in attendance is considered sufficient in infants' schools.

Schools.	Average Attendance.	9 square feet.	10 square feet.
Model Infants - - -	57	89	81
Guy's Infants - - -	156	155	140
Harryville Girls - - -	207	252	224

Rebuilding of Guy's National School Ballymena—Approval of Site.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what steps have been taken towards the rebuilding of Guy's National Schools, Ballymena; if the Commissioners are satisfied that an eligible site has been procured by the governors of Guy's School; and have they approved of it.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) A grant towards the rebuilding has been provisionally sanctioned, and the site has been favourably reported on by the Board of Works, but the acceptance of the site will not be decided on until plans and specifications have been received and considered.

Discovery of Smokeless Coal in British North Borneo.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can furnish information in regard to the reported discovery of smokeless coal in the North-East of British North Borneo.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) We understand that a discovery of smokeless coal has been made at a place called Jambongon, on the north-east coast of the British North Borneo Company's territory. Full details have not yet been received, but investigations are in progress.

Cotton Cultivation in British North Borneo.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any companies have yet been formed with a view to the cultivation of cotton in British North Borneo; and can he state whether any samples of native cotton have been submitted to British valuers; and, if so, with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) We are informed that a company is in course of formation with a view to the cultivation of rubber with catch crops of cotton in British North Borneo. Samples of native cotton have been examined and have been favourably reported upon.

Improved Mail Service at Millport and Kilchattan Bay.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been directed to the need of an improved mail service at Millport and at Kilchattan Bay; and whether he will consider the advisability of an early morning delivery and departure viâ Fairlie, to continue throughout the year.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am having inquiry made into the question of providing the additional postal facilities to which the hon. Member refers, and I will acquaint him with the result in due course.

Promotion of Assistant Postmen.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in Liverpool, Glasgow, and other places, there are assistant postmen with more than three years service for whom there appear no chances of early appointment to full duties; and whether he will take steps to remedy this, in accordance with the promise made by the Postmaster-General in 1903 that assistant postmen should be given full appointments after not more than three years service as assistants, and on reaching the age of twenty.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am aware of the facts to which the hon. Member refers. The difficulty results from the scheme whereby half the vacancies on the class of postmen are given to ex-soldiers or ex-sailors, and half to Post Office servants. During the war the operation of the scheme was disturbed, since Reservists could not be obtained, and consequently an undue proportion of Post Office servants entered the class of assistant postmen. The scheme being now once more in full operation, the Post Office servants, notwithstanding their excessive numbers, have only half the vacancies as full postman, and consequently their promotion is retarded. I trust that this state of things, though unfortunate, is only temporary, and no effort on my part shall be spared to relieve it. No absolute promise was made in 1903 that full appointments would be given after not more than three years service as assistant postman, or before reaching the age of twenty. My predecessor undertook only that this should be done as far as possible.

Altacarry Head Lighthouse, Rathlin Island.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the attention of the Commissioners of Irish Lights has been called to the fact that the lighthouse on Altacarry Head, Rathlin Island, being on the east side of the island, is entirely invisible from the West, and only comes into view in a north-westerly direction to vessels coming from the westward; and whether those interested in the coast trade of the North-West of Ireland have requested the Commissioners to erect a new lighthouse with fog syren or gun on the west end of the island, arranged so as to serve the south side of the island; and if the Commissioners purpose erecting such a light.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Representations were made to the Commissioners of Irish Lights by the Advisory Committee of Shipowners, etc., on New Lighthouse Works, urging the erection of a lighthouse and fog signal at the western end of Rathlin Island. The Commissioners estimated the probable cost at between £20,000 and £25,000, and applied for the necessary financial sanction of the Board of Trade, who withheld it in deference to the wish of the Advisory Committee, who expressed the view that, although they had in the first instance asked for this work, the necessity for it was not great enough to warrant so large an expenditure,

French Import Duties on Hams.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade what are the French import duties on hams of British origin; and what are the corresponding duties on hams of American or Canadian origin.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The French import duty on hams of English or Irish origin is at the rate of 30 francs per 100 kilogs. (12s. 2d. per cwt.) American or Canadian hams pay 50 francs per 100 kilogs. (£1 0s. 4d. per cwt.), and, in addition, a *surtaxe d'entrepôt* of 3 francs 60 cents. per 100 kilogs. (1s. 5½d. per cwt.) if imported viâ a European country.

Sale of the "Boadicea."

Mr. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what are the percentage terms upon which the "Boadicea" is being broken up.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The terms are that the Admiralty will receive the reserve price placed upon the sale of this ship as a minimum, and, in addition, a percentage upon any sum realised above this reserve. It is not desirable to state what this percentage rate is.

Issue of Annuities for Payment for Electric Light and Power in Naval Establishments.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury for what period annuities have been issued to pay for electric light and power in naval establishments under the Naval Works Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The Act referred to sanctions borrowing for any period up to thirty years. The annuities so far set up run for twenty-nine years. They provide for repayment of sums borrowed for the purposes of the Act generally.

Income-Tax Abatements.

Mr. J. H. LEWIS: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the total amount of abatements paid to income-tax payers during the year ending March 31st, 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) If the hon. Member will refer to Table CCXXXIV., on page 229 of the Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for the year 1903–4 [Cd. 2228], he will find an analysis of the repayments of the income-tax made in each of the ten years to March 31st, 1904. It shows that in the year ending March 31st, 1904, the sum repaid in respect of "Abatements" was £931,703 out of a total of £2,868,798 for repayments of all kinds.

Imperial Revenue—Contributions from Direct and Indirect Taxation.

Mr. MOUNT (Berkshire, Newbury): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state what were the proportions contributed by direct taxation and indirect taxation respectively to the actual revenue in the years 1894–5, 1899–1900, and 1904–5, and to the estimated revenue in the year 1905–6.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The proportions of Tax Revenue (excluding Coal Export Duty, but including Local Taxation Revenue) derived from direct and indirect taxes respectively, are as follows—

Year.	Direct.	Indirect.
1894–5	45·4	54·6
1899–1900	48·4	51·6
1904–5 (approximate)	49·1	50·9
1905–6 (Budget Estimate)	50·2	49·8

French Duties on British and Indian Silk and Jute Goods.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for India what are the French import duties on Indian silk goods and Indian jute goods; and what are the corresponding duties on British silk goods and British jute goods.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The French import duties on silk goods and on jute goods are numerous, owing to the minuteness of classification adopted in the tariff. The various duties on silk goods and jute goods the manufacture of the United Kingdom are set out in detail on pages 80–82 and 100–102 of the Parliamentary Return of Foreign Import Duties for 1904. Similar goods the produce or manufacture of India pay the same duties, except so far as the United Kingdom, in virtue of most-favoured-nation treatment, enjoys certain conventional rates which do not apply to India.

Sentence on J. R. Sullivan, of Millstreet, County Cork.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of His Excellency has recently been called to the case of a prisoner named John R. Sullivan, of Millstreet, county Cork, who was sentenced at the Winter Assizes, Nenagh, 1891, to fourteen years and ten years penal servitude, to run consecutively; and whether, in view of the prisoner's conduct, and the circumstances of his wife and family, His Excellency can now see his way to exercise his prerogative and commute the sentence of this man.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a man named John R. Sullivan, of Millstreet, county Cork, was sentenced at the Nenagh Assizes, 1891, to two terms of imprisonment, viz., fourteen years and ten years, to run consecutively, and that this prisoner's conduct has been regarded by the prison authorities as so exemplary that the first term expired in 1902; and whether, in view of the prisoner's conduct and of the circumstances of his wife and family, and also that life sentences and long-term imprisonments for offences committed about the same period have been commuted, he will recommend the Lord-Lieutenant to order the early release of this prisoner, who has already suffered fourteen and a half years imprisonment.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I understand that this case has already been considered by the Lord-Lieutenant, and that it will again come before him in due course. It does not fall within my province to make any recommendation in the matter.

Caldbeck Estate, Queen's County.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will furnish a copy of the report of the inspector appointed by the Estates Commissioners in connection with the proposed sale of the Caldbeck Estate, Queen's County.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) These reports are furnished for the information of the Commissioners, and are confidential documents which cannot be made public.

Rifle Manufacture—Cost of Inspection.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state the estimated cost of inspection per rifle at Enfield, as compared with that at the Birmingham Small Arms and London Small Arms Factories respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Bromley Davenport.*) It is estimated that the cost of inspection of rifles made at Enfield and by the Birmingham Small Arms and London Small Arms Factories during the past financial year is the same.

Civilian Chaplains serving in the South African War.

CAPTAIN NORTON: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state why acting chaplains who served with the troops in South Africa during the late campaign have not received the gratuity of £100, to which, by the wording of Article 601 B of the Pay Warrants, they appear to be entitled; and whether these officers are entitled to any allowance for outfit.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Civilian clergy employed with troops were not regarded as appointed to military positions in the Imperial forces during emergency, and were consequently ineligible for the gratuity specially given on retirement from such an appointment. The regulations do not admit of the grant of outfit allowance to them, but an advance of pay was granted at the commencement of their employment. Further, they received a war gratuity on the cessation of their employment provided that they had been so employed for nine months and had given their whole time to the service of the Army.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Admiralty Sales of Blue Serges.

MR. BARRAN (Leeds, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the value of the blue serges sold by auction and tender in the months of November, December, January, and February last.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham): Blue serge, value about £3,000, was sold—all by auction—at Deptford on the 6th December, 1904. This was the only sale of serge during the period named in the hon. Member's Question.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): Cannot the hon. Gentleman give the price per yard realised?

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): And are you not at the present moment buying serges?

MR. ARTHUR LEE: I must ask for notice of any further Questions.

Cost of the Infantry Soldier.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the actual number of efficient soldiers of Infantry of the Line of twenty years of age obtained from each 1,000 recruits enlisted at ordinary recruiting age; the actual amount expended directly or indirectly on such 1,000 recruits, including all expenditure on those who do not attain the age of twenty and become efficient soldiers, and can thus ascertain the actual cost of each soldier becoming fit for active service; and whether he has compared such cost with the expense incurred by the Admiralty in enrolling boys for the Navy and training them to become efficient seamen for the Fleet.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The average number of efficient soldiers of Infantry of the Line, of twenty years of age and upward, obtained from 1,000 recruits enlisted at ordinary recruiting age is 827. The expenditure on each batch of 1,000 recruits, including the expenditure on those who do not attain the age of twenty and become efficient soldiers, is about £70,000, giving a cost of about £84 10s. for each soldier fit for active service. Figures relating to seamen have been given by my hon. friend in reply to the hon. Member's Question on the 5th instant.†

Status of Volunteer Officers.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he would be prepared to give consideration to a proposal for improving the *status* of Volunteer officers on the lines of granting Army rank or honorary Army rank to those being duly qualified and efficient, who would be willing to undertake the legal obligation of foreign service in the event of war, the minimum period of such obligation being (say) three years; and whether such officers who had served under such conditions should be entitled to Army rank upon retirement in ordinary course.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The whole question of the Reserve of officers is under consideration by a specially appointed Committee, and I will undertake that my hon. friend's suggestion shall be laid before that Committee. I will point out, however, that in many cases officers undertaking such a liability as he suggests would necessarily be withdrawn from their own units in time of war.

The Reduction of the Volunteer Force.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the feeling expressed in all parts of the House and the country against any reduction in the numbers of the Volunteer force, and against it being financially stinted, he will reconsider his recent proposals and carry out without further delay the unanimous recommendations of the Duke of Norfolk's Commission.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As my hon. friend is aware, considerable additional expenditure would be necessary for the purpose of carrying out the recommendations of the Norfolk Commission. I have already informed the House that it is desired to make concessions to the Volunteers greatly in excess of those recommended by the Norfolk Commission, when funds are available for that purpose, but that no sufficient sum will be available until the reduction of the force has taken place.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my last Question, whether he will reconsider his recent proposal for the reduction of the Volunteer force?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir; it cannot be reconsidered.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): The right hon. Gentleman has already given an undertaking that there shall be no reduction in the grant to the Volunteers this year. Will he give a similar undertaking with regard to the numbers?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir; that would be impossible.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: How does the right hon. Gentleman propose to reduce the numbers?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I have already answered that Question twice. I have said that during the current year we hope to reduce the force by enforcing the medical inspection standard more rigidly, and by reducing those units, if there are any, which are clearly not capable of rendering military service.

Army Serges.

Mr. BARRAN: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will state the value of the blue serges sold by auction and tender during the months of November, December, January, and February last.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. No blue serges have been sold by auction or otherwise.

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† See page 449.

Cost of Machine Guns.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why, in the Army Return Cd. 2431 just issued, the comparison has been left incomplete in the case of machine guns, the cost of those manufactured at Enfield (Table IX.) being given, but the cost of those ordered from the trade (Table XVII.) being omitted.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: It was a condition of the manufacture of machine guns by the trade that the price would not be published. It was not, therefore, possible to include this information in the Return mentioned.

MR. HIGHAM: Would it not be possible to give the average cost so as to disclose no one's secret?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I will consider if that can be done without a breach of the undertaking we have given.

Zionist Expedition against the Nandi.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the punitive expedition against the Nandi, said to be necessary by the Zionist Commission, will be undertaken at the cost of the Zionists; if his sanction will be necessary for such an expedition; and, if so, before granting it, will he cause the strictest independent inquiry as to the position of this tribe to be made.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have received no communication from the Zionist Commission on the subject of an expedition against the Nandi. No such expedition would be permitted without my sanction and without cogent proofs furnished by His Majesty's Commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate that it was necessary.

Chinese Coolie Strike at the North Randfontein Mine.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he yet has any information of a strike of 2,000 Chinese coolies on Saturday week last, at the North Randfontein Mine, near Krugersdorp, the alleged grounds of revolt being dissatisfaction with wages; that, on the police being called in, the casualties among the Chinese were considerable, and that fifty-three coolies were eventually arrested; and whether he can state the particular gounds affecting wages which appear to have caused the outbreak.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state how many Chinese coolies were concerned in the riot which took place at the North Randfontein Mine on 1st April; what was the cause of the disturbance; what were the casualties among the coolies and among the police; how many coolies were arrested; and, if their trial has already taken place, what sentences have been inflicted.

MR. LYTTELTON: The facts as reported to me by Sir A. Lawley are briefly as follows: The number of coolies at the Randfontein Mine are about 2,000, and a general strike arose out of a dispute between the mine manager and the labourers as to the interpretation of Clause 6 of the contract of service. The labourers claim that each individual labourer was bound to receive fifty shillings per month irrespective of amount of work which he might perform. The head boys incited all other labourers on the mine to refuse to drill more than twelve inches during a shift of ten hours, a hole of thirty-six inches being accepted ordinary day's work for unskilled labourers. Work in the mine was impeded for three days, when mine management decided to have the ringleaders arrested and charged before magistrate. Ringleaders resisted police, who were also set upon by the coolies. Eventually they arrested fifty-nine ringleaders without firing a shot. No lives were lost, casualties practically nil. As soon as ringleaders had been removed the remaining coolies went quietly to their work. I have not yet received information as to the trial and sentences of the ringleaders.

DR. MACNAMARA asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, after six months, these labourers were not now entitled to at least 1s. 6d. a day.

Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir; and they are receiving that.

Dr. MACNAMARA: Is it not the fact that they caused this riot because they have not received it?

Mr. LYTTELTON: No, Sir. The dispute arose not as to the right to receive 1s. 6d., but as to the day's work for which the 1s. 6d. was to be received.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL asked whether, if the coolies did not perform the amount of work which the mineowners considered satisfactory, they would not receive the 1s. 6d?

Mr. LYTTELTON: The judges as to whether a day's work is satisfactory or not are not the mineowners but the Courts of law.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he considered the arrests because the men asked for better pay were legal?

Mr. LYTTELTON: That is not the point. They were not arrested for asking for better wages, but because the ringleaders impeded the work of the mine.

Mr. LOUGH: And is the arrest for that legal?

Mr. LYTTELTON: No doubt.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what was the average rate of wages paid to the Chinese labourers employed on the North Randfontein Mine before the recent riot; whether these labourers have been in the Transvaal for the period of six months which would entitle them to be paid a minimum wage of 1s. 6d. a day; whether they were recently asked to sign any supplementary contract of service; and, if so, what were the terms of that contract.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have received the following statement from Sir Arthur Lawley:—Coolies had been in Transvaal six months. There has not yet been time since expiration of six months employment to compute rate of wages paid, but assessment appears to be under £2 10s. 0d.; coolies on day work were receiving eighteenpence per ten hours shift for ordinary day's work. Coolies on piece-work or desiring piece-work were offered opportunity of accepting and signing a supplementary agreement in terms of Clause 6 of the contract of service at following rates: halfpenny per inch drilled with a bonus of threepence per shift if thirty-six inches or over were drilled. Acting Superintendent has most carefully explained to coolies this offer, which is more favourable to ordinary worker than day pay of eighteenpence.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Has that contract been sanctioned by the Courts?

Mr. LYTTELTON: No sanction of such a contract is required of the Courts; but I entirely agree with the hon. Member, if that is the suggestion which underlies his Question, that no supplementary contract of this kind should be entered into without the closest investigation in the interests of the men.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why the Transvaal Government, instead of arresting fifty-nine men, who in this country would be called trade union leaders, but in South Africa are called ringleaders, did not take steps to have this contract examined?

Mr. LYTTELTON: I do not know what the hon. Gentleman includes in the term trade union leaders, but I do not agree with him in supposing that trade union leaders are those who constantly oppose the law.

Transvaal Profit Tax.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what was the amount realised by the 10 per cent. Profit Tax in the Transvaal for the year 1904.

Mr. LYTTELTON: The amount was £357,023.

Mr. CAWLEY: Has that been paid in?

Mr. LYTTELTON was understood to reply in the affirmative.

Export of old Horses to the Continent.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to state the result of the inquiries which, in August † last year, he promised should be made concerning the number of old and slaughtered horses, or horses unfit for work, that are periodically exported from this country to Belgium, Holland, and Germany; and if he can say for what purpose their carcases are used; and whether their flesh is made into condiments of various kinds, returned to this country, and sold as articles of food.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): I regret that, owing to an oversight, some delay occurred before the information was asked for, but we hope to obtain it before very long, and I will then communicate it to the hon. Member.

Mr. CREMER: Will you make the statement publicly? I want the country to know the facts.

Earl PERCY: Yes, if the hon. Member will put a Question down.

Imprisonment for Non-Payment of Fines—Case of Joseph Wright.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that on April 3rd Joseph Wright, an artisan, of West Bridgeford, Nottingham, a man of respectable antecedents, who has never before been charged with any offence by the police, was, upon being fined 10s. by the Nottingham bench of magistrates for riding a bicycle without a lamp, refused permission to go out for or telephone for the sum of 2s. 4½d., which he required to make up the fine; that he was driven to the county gaol in the prison van, made to strip and to put on prison clothing, and imprisoned in a cell until his employer paid the balance of the fine; and whether he can take any steps to prevent the recurrence of such treatment.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have made inquiry in this case and find that the prisoner made no application to the magistrates for time to pay his fine. He had not sufficient money with him for the purpose, and though the police, who were very busy at the time, did what they could to send a message to his employers, the reply did not come till after Wright had been removed to prison. On his reception there, on a commitment showing him to be a convicted prisoner, the prison authorities had no option but to treat him as such. So far as I can see no blame attaches to either the police or the prison authorities, but at the same time it seems to me very unsatisfactory that a respectable man should have gone to prison in default of paying a fine which at the time he appears to have been both willing and able to pay, and I am in communication with the magistrates with a view of seeing how best such an occurrence can be prevented in future. The case is an unfortunate one.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): The man made every effort to be allowed to pay the fine.

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: Still I do not think the police are to blame.

Mr. YOXALL: Other cases of this kind have occurred. Will the right hon. Gentleman issue a circular to all justices' clerks with regard to these cases?

***Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS**: I am in sympathy with the hon. Member, and think that hardship has been inflicted on Wright, but I cannot see that either the police or the prison authorities are to blame. But it does seem—on the facts supplied to me—that the magistrates might have made further inquiries as to Wright's position and ability to pay. I am not prepared to issue any such general circular as suggested, at all events until I have received the answer to my inquiry.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxix., 977.

"Passive Resisters"—The Postmaster-General and the Tibenham Postmaster.

Mr. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Mr. William Howlett, of Tibenham, county Norfolk, has received an official intimation that if he is summoned again as a passive resister the post office at Tibenham will be removed from his premises; and if this intimation has been sent to Mr. Howlett with his knowledge and sanction.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The facts of the case are as follows:—Mr. Howlett was informed by my direction that I cannot permit the scandal caused by distress being levied on premises where Post Office business is conducted, and he was warned that if anything of the kind occurs again the office will be taken out of his hands.

The Australian Mail Service.

Mr. RUNCIMAN; I beg to ask the Postmaster-General a Question of which I have given him private notice —namely, whether the Australian Commonwealth Government and the Orient Pacific Line have yet been able to arrive at an agreement for the resumption of a fortnightly mail service between Australia and the United Kingdom, and, if so, when the new service will commence.

Lord STANLEY: Yes, Sir; I have received a telegram from the Postmaster-General of the Commonwealth to say that terms have been agreed upon between that Government and the Orient Company for a fortnightly service, which will be alternate with that which this country has by way of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. The first service will begin from Adelaide on April 13th for the homeward mail, and the outward mail from Naples on April 16th.

Allotments.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board how much land for the purpose of allotments has been acquired under Sections 9, 10, and 11 of the Local Government Act, 1894, which relate to the acquisition of land otherwise than by agreement.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): According to the Parliamentary Returns of February 10th, 1898, and May 28th, 1903, giving particulars on this subject, 269 acres, 3 roods, 31 poles had been acquired compulsorily up to March 31st, 1902, for the purpose referred to. All this land has been acquired under Section 10, which deals with compulsory hiring. Since then, Orders authorising the compulsory acquisition under the same section of 31 acres, 2 roods, 38 poles have been confirmed. I cannot state positively that the land has been acquired.

Boards of Guardians and Underfed School Children.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is now in a position to say how far boards of guardians may assist local education authorities in the work of providing food for children in attendance at public elementary schools suffering from want of proper food.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think that I can conveniently make a statement on this subject for the moment, but I hope shortly to be in a position to issue a circular to boards of guardians with regard to their powers and duties in relation to underfed children.

Millport and Kilchattan Bay Railway Service.

Mr. LAMONT: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to a complaint made on behalf of the inhabitants of Millport and of Kilchattan Bay, that their business is hampered by the action of the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company in cutting off communication between Fairlie and those places during six months in the year; and whether, in the interests of the trade of Millport and of Kilchattan Bay, the Board of Trade will use their good offices with the railway company to induce it to maintain the connection throughout the year.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): I have communicated with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company on the subject of the hon. Member's Question, and the companies have replied that there is not sufficient traffic during the winter months to warrant the continuance of two competing railway steamers, but the Caledonian Railway Company's steamers, which carry the mails, maintain a winter service between Wemyss Bay and Millport.

Brussels Sugar Convention—British Appeal to the Permanent Commission.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what day has been fixed for the sitting of the Brussels Sugar Convention to hear the appeal of His Majesty's Government against the condemnation of the countries mentioned in the despatch of 26th November; who will represent this country at the hearing of the case; and whether he can state the grounds on which the appeal is founded.

MR. BONAR LAW: The Permanent Commission is now sitting. The British Delegation consists of Sir H. Bergne, Mr. Llewellyn Smith, and Mr. Martineau. With regard to the last Question I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer returned to him on the 16th February † last by my right hon. friend the Member for Central Leeds.

MR. LOUGH: Has the appeal of this country been admitted?

MR. BONAR LAW: I do not think I shall do any harm by informing the hon. Member that no prohibition orders will be necessary in the case of any countries in regard to which we appealed, and I believe the Commission ceased its sitting last night.

Annual Account, National Debt (Savings Banks and Friendly Societies).

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can say why the Annual Account, National Debt (Savings Banks and Friendly Societies), for the period ended 20th November, 1904, presented on 16th March and ordered to be printed (No. 85), has not yet been distributed.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The Return to which the hon. Member refers was issued on Saturday last.

School Teachers' Duties to Underfed Children.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is now in a position to issue a circular to public elementary school teachers respecting assistance from the boards of guardians for hungry children; and, if so, whether he will shortly state the main terms of that circular.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): This matter is being put forward with all due despatch, but I am afraid I am not yet in a position to make any definite statement on the subject.

Lord Provost of Perth—Question of Precedence.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state whether the Royal Warrant of the 11th March, 1905, in any sense abrogates the order of precedence hitherto held by the Lord Provost of Perth, who under the Royal Charter of King James VI. of Scotland, bearing date 1600, has always come immediately after the Lord Provost of Edinburgh in the procession at the opening of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, as well as at State or Court Functions, such as the presentation of the Lord Provosts and Provosts of Scotland to Her Majesty the late Queen, on which occasion, viz., the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee in 1897, the Lord Provost of Perth was presented immediately after the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

*THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am informed that the Royal Warrant does not affect the precedence of the Lord Provosts of Perth with reference to other Lord Provosts or Provosts.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 312.

Procurators-Fiscal and Cost of Outside Medical Opinion.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate if, in the case of a procurator-fiscal calling in outside medical opinion from a distance without reasonable grounds for such action, he will be compelled to pay out of his own pocket the extra expenses thereby entailed on the county.

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: This is a legal question to which it is impossible to give a sufficient reply except with reference to the precise facts of a particular case.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into the facts of a case if I send them to him?

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: Yes, Sir.

Outdoor Relief to Widows.

MR. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in cases of relief to widows with young children, the Local Government Board will use its influence and see that outdoor relief be given to suitable cases of such an amount as will enable the home to be kept on, instead of offering the poorhouse; and whether such influence will be used in case 43,145 brought under the notice of the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Edinburgh, on 14th March and in previous communications.

*MR. SCOTT DICKSON: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the circular issued by the Local Government Board for Scotland on June 5th, 1902, which specially dealt with the relief of widows with young children. The Local Government Board have endeavoured to secure that due effect should be given to the views therein expressed in the case referred to by the hon. Member.

Lord Kenmare's Kerry Estate.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry. E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board have taken or propose to take any steps to negotiate for the purchase of the estate of Lord Kenmare, in the county of Kerry, or of the congested portion of it, as the landlord has signified his willingness to sell and the tenants to buy, but in connection with which no advance has been made owing to the difficulty as to terms.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): No, Sir. The arrangement of terms is obviously a matter for the parties themselves.

MR. MURPHY: Then am I to understand that the Estates Commissioners will do nothing to bring about a settlement in this case?

MR. WALTER LONG: I think that is the correct interpretation of my Answer. It is not a case for outside interference.

Cahirciveen Hosiery Industry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the capitation grant payable to the Cahirciveen hosiery industry is insufficient to develop the industry; and whether, in view of the fact that a sum amounting to about £400 has been provided from private sources, the Department will now sanction the grant of £80 which has been voted every year by the county council out of the funds at its disposal during the past five years, but which the Department has hitherto refused to sanction.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Department cannot answer the first inquiry. A grant-in-aid is not the only circumstance upon which the development of an industry depends. The Department are not prepared to sanction the proposed grant, for the reasons stated in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of March 22nd†.

Dennehy Estate, Glencar.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations for the purchase of the Dennehy Estate, Glencar, have taken place between the Congested Districts Board and the landlord; and can he state on what terms the Board were willing to purchase the estate.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 799.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The Board made an offer for purchase which was not accepted. The terms cannot be disclosed.

Kerry Technical Instruction Schemes.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that although schemes of technical instruction, approved of by the Department of Agriculture, can be put into operation in the congested portion of county Kerry, the grants by which alone they can be worked are not forthcoming; and can he state what steps will be taken to put the congested districts of the county on the same footing as the non-congested districts.

Mr. WALTER LONG: The funds available under the scheme of technical instruction adopted by the county committee, and approved by the Department, are applicable to congested and non-congested districts alike. As I have already stated, the Congested Districts Board have no funds to contribute to the county scheme.

Kerry and the Congested Districts Board.

Mr. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to complaints made as to the failure of the Congested Districts Board to use their powers effectively in the county of Kerry and elsewhere in the South of Ireland, he will now consider the advisability of adding a representative from the South of Ireland on the Board with the view of making their work effective in that part of Ireland.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I am not prepared to admit the assumption that the work of the Board has not been effective in the South of Ireland. There is no present vacancy on the Board. When a vacancy occurs, all the existing circumstances will be fully considered.

Mr. MURPHY: Is it not the fact that the Board have done nothing in Kerry but purchase two farms? Does the right hon. Gentleman call that effective work?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I do not think that that is correct.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that complaints are made by public bodies all over Ireland as to the action of this Board?

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir, since I have been Chief Secretary I have received many complaints.

Steamer Services on the South West Coast of Ireland.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Dingle District Council protesting against an arrangement alleged to be entered into between the Congested Districts Board and the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, whereby the former give an undertaking not to subsidise for the next five years any steamer on the south west coast of Ireland; whether this arrangement has been entered into; and, if so, what is the object.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. The arrangement has been entered into. Its object was to secure favourable railway rates upon the withdrawal of the subsidised steamship service.

Kerry Evicted Tenants.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have given any, and, if so, what financial assistance to the evicted tenants reinstated in the county of Kerry; whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners have taken no steps to reinstate any evicted tenant in the county; and whether they will now initiate proceedings with the various landlords for the reinstatement of those men.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners are prepared to consider proposals to reinstate evicted tenants on estates which may come before them for sale; and if they should acquire untenanted land in the county the claims of evicted tenants will be considered. No financial assistance was given by the Commissioners to the nineteen evicted tenants who have been reinstated by landlords.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: What is going to happen to those tenants whose landlords will not sell? How long are they going to remain without being reinstated?

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member knows that where there is untenanted land steps are taken to reinstate them.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that considerable sales of land are taking place in North Kerry—of untenanted lands in the occupation of the landlords? Will he take steps to enter into negotiations in these cases?

MR. WALTER LONG: If the hon. Member will furnish me with particulars I will inquire.

Land Purchase in South Cork.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many and what estates have been purchased since the passing of the Land Act, 1903, in South Cork; how many tenants are affected; what is the total purchase price and net rental of each estate so purchased.

MR. WALTER LONG: Statistics by Parliamentary Divisions are not available. In the entire county 207 estates, comprising 3,204 holdings, have been purchased. Of these holdings 3,170 were tenanted, the rental being £68,365. The purchase price of the tenanted land was £1,453,507, and of the untenanted land £27,765.

Sir Antony MacDonnell.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sir Antony MacDonnell holds the position of Under-Secretary for Ireland on the lines and under the conditions laid down in the late Chief Secretary's letter when making the appointment; and, if not, will he explain the terms, if any, under which he retains office over and above those of an ordinary Civil servant.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): May I at the same time also ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the conditions under which the Under-Secretary was appointed by the late Chief Secretary have been in any way changed.

MR. WALTER LONG: I had hoped that the reply given by me on the 6th inst.† to the Question of my hon. friend the Member for South Belfast sufficiently explained the relations subsisting between myself and the Under-Secretary. I observe, however, that considerable misconception still appears to exist, and I think it necessary, therefore, to make a fuller statement in order to remove, as far as possible, all misunderstandings in the matter. It has been suggested that a special compact exists, the object of which is to avoid the publication of correspondence. There is not the smallest foundation for this suggestion. It is invidious for me to have to criticise my predecessor, and I have hitherto refrained from doing so; but I conceive that the prevalent misunderstandings have their origin very largely in the declaration made by my right hon. friend in this House on February 20th,‡ when he stated that the letters that had passed between him and Sir Antony MacDonnell made it perfectly plain and clear that the latter was invited by my predecessor rather as a colleague than as a mere Under-Secretary to register his will. I must dissociate myself from this conception of the *status* of the Under-Secretary in so far as it affects our relations. My predecessor reserved to himself, I believe, full power of supervision and control; whether he exercised this power I cannot say. The relations between Sir Antony MacDonnell and myself must, as I have stated, be the same as those which have existed between me and the permanent head of any Department of the State with which I have had the honour to be associated —namely, that, while he may express his opinions on any administrative act and advise me in any matter of policy, everything must be under my complete control and subject to my approval. If this involves a change, then there certainly will be a change in the administration of my Department.

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† See page 648.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 650.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the conditions under which Sir Antony MacDonnell was invited to accept the appointment have, as a matter of fact, been altered?

MR. WALTER LONG: That really must be a matter of which the hon. Member is as good a judge as I am. I have stated quite distinctly what are the conditions that exist between the Under-Secretary and myself. I have stated also that the observance of those conditions must depend on the administration of the Department. All I have said—and to this I adhere—is that I possess and that I intend to exercise full powers of supervision and control. If that involves a change, then that can only be proved by the system of administration we shall pursue.

Caldbeck Estate, Queen's County.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have yet come to a decision with regard to the distribution of the untenanted land on the Caldbeck Estate, Ballacolla, Queen's County; and whether the claims of the thirty-four small occupiers in the locality for portion of this untenanted land will be considered.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; the matter is still under consideration. A question of law, regarding the distribution of parcels of the estate, is involved.

Irish Postmasters as Emigration Agents.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether postmasters in Ireland are still permitted to act as emigration agents or to exhibit emigration notices in their post offices.

LORD STANLEY: There is no prohibition against postmasters and sub-postmasters in Ireland acting as emigration agents so long as their official duties are not interfered with; nor are they forbidden to exhibit emigration notices at their offices.

Defence Against Invasion.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, seeing that the land, marine, and submarine defences of the shores and ports of the United Kingdom are partly under the War Office and partly under the Admiralty, whether the Committee of Imperial Defence has worked out a complete and united scheme for repelling invasion raids; and whether he can see his way to manœuvres this autumn which will put that scheme into practice by land and sea, over a stretch of exposed coast in the defence of which both Departments are concerned.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. and gallant friend, I have to say that the submarine defences referred to in the first sentence of his Question are already under the sole charge of the Admiralty, a change which has been brought about very largely in consequence of discussions in the Defence Committee. As regards the latter part of his Question, I would venture to suggest to my hon. and gallant friend and the House that, though, of course, I have no objection to these Questions being asked, I think they would be asked more usefully when I have had the opportunity of explaining to the House at length, and possibly in some detail, the views to which the Defence Committee have come and which I promised to lay before the Committee of the House at an early date after Easter. It is difficult to deal with these complicated problems by way of Question and Answer; and, if they are to be so dealt with, they can be dealt with with much more advantage when the House have the general views of the Government before them and have had time to consider them.

COLONEL WELBY: Can my right hon. friend say whether the submarine defences of the non-naval as well as the naval ports have been taken over by the Admiralty?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that the change has already been effected, but it is certainly in process of being effected, and will be completed, I hope, shortly.

The Irish Viceroyalty.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will now consider the advisability of abolishing the office of the Viceroy of Ireland, and of substituting for it a Secretaryship of State.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There are undoubted anomalies in the office of Viceroy of Ireland; but the change which my hon. friend suggests, which has been often under the consideration of the House, involves questions of policy too large to be dealt with at the present moment. Certainly the Government are not going to bring in a Bill in the course of the present session.

MR. COGHILL: Have we not had quite enough by this time of government of Ireland by Dublin Castle?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know where the new Secretary of State would carry on his work, except in Dublin Castle, and, that being the case, I do not see that my hon. friend's suggestion contains any remedy.

Redistribution Proposals.

MR. COGHILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, in view of the position given to the question of the Redistribution of Seats in His Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne, he will introduce the Resolution on which the Bill is to be founded before the House separates for the Easter recess.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I answered this Question yesterday.† It would be impossible for us to find time before Easter to introduce any proposals on this subject.

MR. COGHILL: Has the Government really serious intentions of dealing with this subject this session, or is the Bill to be introduced for the purpose of what is called shop-window dressing?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite understand the contrast between serious and shop-window which appears to govern the Question of the hon. Gentleman. The proposals we mean to make to the House are serious proposals.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): How soon after Easter will they be made?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is much too early to name a day for any business after Easter.

COAL MINES (WEIGHING OF MINERALS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 122.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 162.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

MR. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from serving on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Tennant.

Report to lie upon the Table.

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† See page 1010.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. **HALSEY** reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from serving on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Trades Unions and Trade Disputes Bill: Mr. Jordan and Mr. Clancy; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Hayden and Mr. Nannetti.

Mr. **HALSEY** further reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had appointed Mr. Charles Craig a Member of the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. **HALSEY** reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Drunkenness (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Conor O'Kelly, Mr. Hugh Law, Sir James Haslett, Captain Donelan, Mr. Wood, Mr. Sloan, Mr. O'Dowd, Mr. Crean, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. Thomas Lorimer Corbett, Mr. John Gordon, and Mr. William Moore.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. **HALSEY** reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill:—Colonel Lockwood, Colonel Denny, Sir Gilbert Parker, Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. David MacIver, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Talbot, Lord Edmund Talbot, Mr. Boscawen, Mr. Malcolm, Colonel Welby, Mr. Mount, and Mr. Worsley-Taylor.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 163.]

RESERVE FORCES BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 164.]

SERVICE OF MILITIAMEN BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 165.]

SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' FALSE CHARACTERS BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 166.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (FEEDING OF CHILDREN) BILL.

Order for Second Reading To-morrow read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

NEW BILLS.

HIGHWAYS BILL,

"To amend the Law relating to Highways," presented by Mr. Henry Hobhouse; supported by Sir John Dorington, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Bill, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 5th, and to be printed. [Bill 167.]

EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903," presented by Mr. Lambert; supported by Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Eve, and Sir Edgar Vincent; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 12th, and to be printed. [Bill 168.]

LAND TENURE BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land," presented by Mr. Lambert; supported by Mr. Eve, Mr. Soares, Mr. Charles Allen, Mr. Fletcher Moulton, and Mr. Edwards; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 12th, and to be printed. [Bill 169.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To make further provision for Local Government in Scotland; and for other purposes," presented by Mr. Maxwell; to be read a second time upon Monday, May 8th, and to be printed. [Bill 170.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

TEA.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That there shall be charged on and after the first day of July, nineteen hundred and five, until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six, the following Customs Import duty on tea (that is to say)—

'Tea, the pound . . Sixpence' "—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that all agreed that if there were a subject of indirect taxation that ought to be relieved it was, beyond all question, tea. But the taking off of 2d. a lb. from the duty was open to one serious objection, and that was that the very poor would not derive any benefit from the relief of taxation. The reduction of 2d. would no doubt benefit those who bought their tea in large quantities, but those who had to purchase it in very small quantities could not possibly get any advantage from the change. They had always been told that the income-tax payers had the first claim to consideration when an opportunity was afforded for the remission of taxation, and it certainly seemed hard that their interests should have been neglected in this instance, and that the consumers of tea alone should have received the benefit. Of course they all wished to see a reduction of taxation of every description. He desired to emphasise one statement, and it was that in his judgment the poor income-tax payers formed the class of persons who paid the largest amount of taxation in the whole country. He regretted that it had so often been held that these people were not worthy of much consideration because they were supposed to be rich men, but those who had studied income-tax statistics well knew that the smaller persons were those who paid the largest proportion of the tax, and therefore, he thought it was a pity that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken the more heroic line of saying that, inasmuch as he could not possibly fulfil his pledges to income-tax payers to relieve them of a portion of their burden, he would devote the whole of his surplus to the payment of debt instead of relieving indirect taxation by reducing the duty on tea. No doubt it was a very pleasant thing to reduce the cost of tea, but it should be remembered that the expenditure of this country was growing to an enormous extent, and the people were continually demanding further assistance from the State. The time had come, therefore, when it was desirable to pay an increased amount off the Debt, and he, for one, would have looked with satisfaction at any arrangement by which even more than a million would have been set apart for that purpose.

He knew that the payment of debt was not always popular, but it was a question which struck at the root of our whole financial system. In spite of our enormous prosperity, and in spite of the tremendous increase of wealth in this country during the last thirty or forty years, we were not now paying off more of our debt per year than when Sir Stafford Northcote first introduced his system. Sir Stafford fixed the annual repayment at that time at £28,000,000 a year and under the present system the figure was the same. If only we had adopted the policy of our forefathers in this matter the financial position of this country would have been far better. After all, the strength of the country lay in its ability to cope with any emergency, and its financial strength was one of the most important factors in connection with its defence. He did not wish to say a word against the scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the present occasion, but he must repeat that he thought the time had come when the question of the repayment of debt must be gone into more carefully, and that their efforts should be directed towards that rather than to the remission of taxation. It might be suggested that the public, in view of the national expenditure on alcohol, were not overburdened, and undoubtedly a nation in which each family could voluntarily set aside as much as £20 per annum for alcohol for legitimate use, and which at the same time owed nearly £700,000,000, ought to set apart a larger sum than it now did for the repayment of debt. He had long held that opinion, and he was again crying in the wilderness. He believed, however, that there were other Members who agreed with him that they should do more towards the repayment of debt than they now did. He certainly did not think that £30,000,000 would be an excessive sum to set apart for that purpose annually. The increasing expenditure of the country was largely due to the spirit which had recently been manifested of demanding that the Government should do much for individuals and communities. He thought that that spirit was a mistake and that it undermined the self-reliance of the people. The more they could get the public to look after themselves the better it would be, instead of calling upon the State and municipalities to do so much at the public cost. They still owed money that was raised, practically speaking, at the beginning of the last century for the great French War, and in his opinion that ought to have been cleared off years ago, and it would have been if they had followed the policy adopted by their ancestors at the beginning of the last century. But, instead of that, they had added to their debt.

He was well aware that the reduction of the tea duty commended itself to many people, not only because tea was a necessity, but also because the reduction would benefit our Indian Empire and would encourage the trade of India. So far as that went, the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had his complete sympathy, but he did hope the right hon. Gentleman would take into his consideration the question of the reduction of the Debt, and would set himself resolutely to the task of diminishing the permanent burden.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he would like to add to the expressions of congratulation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the interest and lucidity of the speech in which he introduced his Budget on the preceding night. He was sure the whole House listened to the right hon. Gentleman with great satisfaction, and that it was with especial satisfaction that they heard what he had to say as to the trade of the country and the improvement which had occurred in connection with it. He thought also that the Members on the Opposition side of the House were, on the whole, satisfied with the actual proposals of the right hon. Gentleman, because those proposals were in the direction which they had always advocated, namely, greater reduction of the National Debt and the diminution of indirect taxation, and especially of the tea duty.

Undoubtedly, the great question of the present moment was how the national expenditure was to be reduced, for, so long as that expenditure remained on its present scale, they could not hope for any substantial reduction of debt or of taxation. The general financial position last year was rather curious. It appeared from the right hon. Gentleman's figures that there had been a considerable increase of elasticity in the income-tax apart from what he might call his "hustling" policy, for the tax had produced nearly half a million beyond what had been estimated, and in addition to that the arrears had been brought in more rapidly. But indirect taxation—Customs and Excise—had, on the other hand, shown a great want of elasticity.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) here interrupted the hon. Member, and said that the increased product from the income-tax had been due not so much to the elasticity of the tax as to the fact that he, last year, had rather underestimated the product.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that, at all events, they had had a very satisfactory receipt from the tax, while, on the other hand, the receipts from the Excise and Customs had not been so satisfactory. It seemed to him to prove that the general trade and commerce of the country were in a satisfactory condition, but that the burdens on the consumers at the present moment were so heavy that they had been unable to extract any elasticity from the Customs and Excise. After the right hon. Gentleman had delivered his speech introducing the Budget on the preceding evening, he (the speaker) spoke to a tariff reformer and asked him if he did not regret that nothing had been taken off the income-tax, and the reply very promptly came that it was a matter of perfect indifference because nobody now had any income. The produce from the taxation of other articles consumed by the poorest members of the community had also shown, unfortunately, a want of elasticity, and in the matter of sugar there had not only been the burden of taxation, but the price of the article to the consumer had also been increased by the operation of the Sugar Convention.

The right hon. Gentleman had avoided any mention of the results of certain taxation he introduced last year. For instance, there was the stripped tobacco duty. He certainly did say he rather congratulated himself that, in spite of the alleged disorganisation of the tobacco trade, the revenue from the tobacco duty had been satisfactory. But he (the speaker) wanted to know what had been the actual result of the duty upon stripped tobacco. Had not that very thing happened which they on that side had declared in the course of the debates of the previous year would occur, namely, that there had been practically no stripped tobacco imported into this country, and that there consequently was no revenue arising from it.

He thought that the country might well be congratulated on the fact that the last few months had shown a real turn in the tide of prosperity. A few months ago there appeared to be a falling off, but there had now been a most remarkable change—a change all the more remarkable when they bore in mind the effect of the disturbance of trade through the uncertainty which at the present moment existed in most trades in consequence of the fiscal agitation, and the public ignorance as to what was likely to be the future fiscal policy of this country. No doubt this prosperity was somewhat disheartening to those who had been telling them that their trade was disappearing, and who had been attributing that disappearance to the operation of the principle of free trade. But the great blot on the Budget was the item of expenditure. He was glad to think that the plague of expenditure had to a certain extent been stayed this year. He, however, did not think it was altogether satisfactory that the reduction of expenditure this year as compared with last amounted to less than one million sterling. The whole of that was due to the reduction of the Navy Estimates which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol twelve months ago declared were far in excess of the needs of the country. It was, undoubtedly, essential that there should be a reduction in those Navy Estimates this year, but he thought there was considerable disappointment that that reduction had not been larger than it appeared to be. There had also been extreme disappointment because they were not to have any reduction on the Army Estimates at all in the present year. They had been told by the Secretary of State for War that if he were allowed to carry out his scheme of Army reform it would involve a large reduction of expenditure, but unfortunately the various schemes of reform which had been produced had, in turn, been placed on the scrap heap, and instead of expenditure on the Army having diminished it was continuing at its old figure. The result of all this was that at the present moment they were asking for a sum of £141,000,000 to cover the national expenditure for the year as against a demand for £96,000,000 in the year 1895–6 when the present Administration came into office. And this, it must be borne in mind, was peace expenditure with the exception of about £4,000,000 which represented the contribution towards war expenses—the amount by which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon raised the Sinking Fund two years ago.

The right hon. Gentleman had made three proposals. One was the reduction of the tea duty, and he was glad the right hon. Gentleman chose that in preference to the income-tax, because he felt that the indirect taxpayer had the greater claim to relief. Then there was the second proposal, that dealing with debt, and again he was able to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having taken a step in the right direction. And finally, by the abolition of a certain number of small charges which fettered particular trades, he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had had it in his power to proceed in the direction of the simplification of our fiscal and financial system, and had at the same time exemplified some of the advantages of free trade. He thought, however, something more might have been done to reduce the Debt charge. He did not know if people generally were aware how very little of the South African War debt had yet been paid off. The war cost £220,000,000, and out of the actual proceeds of additional taxation the amount paid in reduction of that cost was £55,000,000; so that there were still £165,000,000 of war charges which had not been met, and were not likely to be met unless the Debt charge was considerably increased. When the matter was under discussion two years ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer was anticipating the receipt of £6,000,000 from the Chinese indemnity and of £30,000,000 as a war contribution from the Transvaal, but neither anticipation had been realised, and personally he was not very much impressed with their chances of getting the latter sum. But still these were the facts on which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon justified his contention that there was no necessity to raise the Sinking Fund above £27,000,000, as he calculated if these moneys came in they would produce such an increase of the Sinking Fund as would enable the Debt to be reduced to £694,000,000 by March, 1908. At the present moment the whole Debt amounted to £796,000,000, and last year the whole operation on the Debt was this, that while £7,500,000 were paid off, £9,500,000 were added. The fact was that at the end of five years the country, so far as debt was concerned, was exactly in the same position as before.

The right hon. Gentleman had drawn a distinction between the dead-weight debt and the debt as against which he said there were specific assets, but with the exception of the Suez Canal shares, which had proved a very good investment, the telegraphs, and perhaps the Uganda Railway, there were no realisable assets, as money spent on naval and military works could not be realised in any sense of the term. The only asset remaining for the capital expenditure on guns and forts and powder and barracks might be said to be the Transvaal itself, and so far that had not proved very profitable. All were glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman express a hope that the capital expenditure would this year be reduced. He was afraid that the right hon. Gentleman was rather over sanguine in regard to this matter, because as soon as one programme was finished another more expensive one was started either for the Army or the Navy.

With regard to the credit of the country one of the objects of the Sinking Fund was not only to reduce the Debt, but also to maintain the credit of the country by annually purchasing funded or unfunded debt. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer bought Consols with the Sinking Fund somewhere about £89; that was to say, he was buying annuities and paying £2 16s. per cent. for them, and in the same year he issued £6,000,000 of Exchequer Bonds upon which he had to pay 3¼ per cent. So that with one hand he was selling stock at £2 16s. per cent. and then buying stock for which he had to pay 3¼ per cent. Of course that was not a profitable transaction for the National Exchequer, and the security which the Sinking Fund ought to give was neutralised. With regard to the £1,000,000 of unclaimed dividends in his balance-sheet, he noticed that he credited himself with £1,000,000 on that account. He would like to know how much Consols had he to sell for that sum and at what price he sold them. He thought that would show the absurdity of the position of the Government having to buy things dear and sell them cheap. He had some doubt whether the particular proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to take £10,000,000 of Exchequer Bonds and apply £1,000,000 each year would be a more satisfactory proposal than merely adding £1,000,000 a year to the fixed debt fund. He should have thought that this course would tie the hands of those who had to deal with these matters each year and force them to extinguish these particular Exchequer Bonds when the Sinking Fund as a whole might be more profitably employed elsewhere. He thought it would have been better simply to have raised the Sinking Fund by £1,000,000 instead of earmarking this money for this particular purpose.

He was entirely in accord with the proposal to reduce the tea duty, and he regretted that the expenditure of the country did not allow the right hon. Gentleman to reduce other duties also. The hon. Member opposite seemed to think that because this proposal would benefit the Colonies the members of the Opposition ought to oppose it. He would remind the hon. Member that those sitting on the Opposition side of the House were just as anxious to benefit the Colonies as any hon. Members, when they could do it with advantage to the Empire as a whole. One reason why the tea duty was selected was that it would benefit the British consumer as well as the colonial producer. He thought the figures in regard to direct taxation which had already been quoted conclusively showed that in this year the right hon. Gentleman, having only a limited amount of money, decided that indirect taxation had a greater claim upon him than the income-tax payer. While the direct taxpayer was paying £10,000,000 a year more in consequence of extra taxation, the indirect taxpayer was paying £13,000,000 more. Within the last two years the direct taxpayer had had a remission of £18,000,000, whilst the indirect taxpayer had only been remitted £2,000,000. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman was dealing in a fair way as between the direct and indirect taxpayer, and he trusted that next year the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able by a reduction in expenditure and increased elasticity in the revenue to take the remaining 2d. off tea and give the direct taxpayer some relief as well.

*Mr. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said that he joined in the congratulation which had been showered upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to all his Budget proposals with the exception of that referring to a reduction of the tea duty. He desired to repeat what he had told the Committee upon a former occasion, namely, that tea had no nutritive properties whatever, that it was merely a stimulant like alcohol and tobacco, and that in the excessive quantities in which it was used by very many in this country it was a very deleterious luxury. It was, therefore, perfectly absurd to endeavour, as many hon. Members had done, to put this stimulant in the position of a prime necessary of life. Sugar was very much wanting in many of the essential qualities of a nourishing food and it ought to be used very sparingly. The consumption of tea in this country had increased by leaps and bounds. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, when proposing to put 2d. on the tea duty last year, stated that the community was "saturated with tea." The consumption increased from 2½ lbs. per head in 1864 to 6½ lbs. at the present time. The consumption of sugar had also increased to an enormous extent. A very large amount was used in connection with tea, and it was also used in large quantities as confectionery. This combination of tea and sugar with its concomitants of a little milk, a little butter, and a very large amount of bread, principally white bread, had become to millions of people in this country the staple diet. It was used morning, noon, and night, and according to the Report of the Commission on Physical Training in 1903, and that on Physical Deterioration in 1904, this diet was the cause of an enormous amount of physical deterioration. It was so destitute of nutritive properties that the families living upon it were in a state of semi-starvation. The deterioration was specially marked among infants and young children, and the effect remained all through life. Infantile mortality was enormous, and one of the great causes of this was the diet to which he was referring. The teeth of the present generation were inferior to those of their ancestors, and the Report of one of these Commissions stated that there was no doubt whatever that this was due to the absence of proper diet. It had also been clearly shown that anemia, dyspepsia, and many other forms of disease were brought about by tea and sugar diet. The supporters of the tea and sugar diet stated that if it was bad it was the best the poor could afford. He would have no difficulty in disposing of that argument. It was quite true that the poor could not afford flesh, fish, fowl, and eggs, which were necessary to supply the deficiencies of the other diet, and which the better classes could afford. But in oats, peas, beans, barley, etc., well cooked as porridge and used along with milk, they had splendid substitutes containing an enormously greater amount of nutriment which could be obtained at a cheaper price. Soups made with beef or mutton, with a large proportion of bone, and containing vegetables, cereals, and pulses, afforded a far better and more nutritious diet, and they could be got for about the same price as the porridge and milk diet to which he was referring.

He had a large amount of statistical and other information on this subject, but he would not trouble the Committee with it. He would put it in the form of a concrete example. A labouring man with a wife and six children, ranging from two to sixteen years of age, required, when using the tea and sugar diet, to spend 15s. 6d. to 16s. 6d. to maintain them even in a condition of semi-starvation. With the other far more wholesome and nutritious diet that man could maintain his family on from 10s. to 11s. per week. If the income was only £1 per week, what an enormous benefit the saving on food of 5s. per week gave to the family for the purpose of providing better clothing and better housing! The objection to this more wholesome diet was that it required a great deal of skill and patience in the cooking. One advantage of tea was that it could be easily cooked. He had great sympathy for the poorer classes, the exigencies of whose employment compelled them to use the more readily cooked article of diet, but tea and sugar formed the diet of an enormous number of the lazy and thriftless in the community. The education authorities had come to recognise the importance of this subject, and to see that it might be of more practical value to a boy or girl to possess information about the elementary principles of health than to have a smattering knowledge of subjects which would be in after life of little use. There was an anti-tea duty society. He thought an anti-tea diet association would be of more practical benefit, and better still a rational food society, and one of its first duties would be to assign to every article of diet used by the working classes its proper place in dietetics, and to instruct the people as to the best method of using it. By this means hundreds of thousands of families who were in a position of penury would be elevated into a position of comparative affluence. He had endeavoured to show that tea and sugar, instead of being necessaries for the poor, were really luxuries they could not afford except in small quantities, so small that any duties upon them would be to the consumers almost infinitesimal—while those who could afford to use them in larger quantities would also be able to pay the taxes. Under these circumstances the question the Chancellor of the Exchequer should consider was not how he could reduce the tea duty, but how he could increase it to the same proportion as that of the kindred luxuries of alcohol and tobacco. In that way the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to increase the tea duty to 1s. 4d. per lb., the figure at which it was in 1874. This would open up to future Chancellors of the Exchequer the fine prospect of being able to raise £20,000,000 extra, while at the same time greatly benefiting the health of the community. But Chancellors of the Exchequer, like ordinary human beings, made their plans in accordance with popular sentiment and the opinion of the time.

There had been a great deal of nonsense talked about "the free breakfast table." They might as well talk about "the free dinner table," including beer, which was regularly a part of the diet of some people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had sympathised with the false sentiment and remitted the tax on tea to the extent of 25 per cent. Scotch Members would be much better employed in endeavouring to restore their national diet, than in inveighing against the tea and sugar duties. English Members, some of whom had shown great aptitude in adopting Scotch customs such as playing golf and drinking whiskey, in which pastimes they sometimes excelled the Scotch, would do better if they assisted to introduce in their country a solid system of diet among the working classes, similar to that which still obtained among hundreds of thousands of the working people in the North. And Irish Members, if they reformed the diet of their fellow-countrymen, would have the double satisfaction of being dietetic reformers and of bringing the taxation of their country into a more proper proportion, according to their ideas, with that of the adjacent island. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown great financial ability in regard to other items in his Budget, but he would have shown statesmanship of a higher order if he had retained the duty on tea at 8d.

*Mr. REA (Gloucester) said he would not attempt to follow the hon. Gentleman in his very interesting and valuable discourse on food and food taxation. He would confine himself to a more superficial criticism of the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In listening to the not altogether unsatisfactory exposition of his Budget by the Chancellor of the Exchequer he felt animated by sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman because of the extreme disappointment which the right hon. Gentleman must have felt in having to open such a Budget to the House of Commons. He remembered that last year the right hon. Gentleman in his Budget speech said that he looked for relief this year to the reforms which his right hon. friend the Secretary for War was preparing in the Army system of this country. Well, they would have been glad for relief from such reforms, but the real objection to his Budget was not to the Budget itself but to the necessity for the Budget. In the situation in which the right hon. Gentleman found himself from the Estimates already accepted by the House, they could not object very much to his proposals. In his estimate of revenue for the year the right hon Gentleman had made an extraordinary good shot—almost a bull's eye; but his hit was compounded of misses. The errors he made in regard to Customs and Excise were excusable; but the right hon. Gentleman had not made allowances for the extraordinary social phenomena manifested in the reduction of the consumption of beer and spirits by the inhabitants of this country. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Devonport that this was to be explained simply by the poverty of the people. On the contrary, he believed that that poverty had been exaggerated on both sides of the House for fiscal purposes. In spite of the statistics of pauperism, unemployment, and consumption of beer and spirits, he did not believe the working classes, as a whole, were suffering from any unprecedented destitution.

He noted that the consumption of tobacco had increased enormously. The tobacco duty had increased by £600,000—more than £250,000 above the estimate. He should like to repeat the question already put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer:—"How much of that increase was due to stripped tobacco?" The hon. Member for Liverpool had assured the Committee that the import of stripped tobacco had entirely ceased, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was therefore wrong in denying last year that the revenue from tobacco was no longer elastic.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No. I never said that.

Mr. REA: I beg pardon. It may have been the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor the year before who stated that the taxation of tobacco had reached its limit.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: What I said last year was that I was advised that to increase the rate of the tax on tobacco would probably reduce the consumption, which might largely affect the revenue. That is not the same thing as saying that the revenue was not elastic.

*Mr. REA said he wondered that the right hon. Gentleman, in considering this tax, did not accept the suggestion which the whole tobacco trade made to him last year. The right hon. Gentleman was told that the trade would prefer to have the duty raised all round to 3s. 3d. per lb. on all tobacco. If the right hon. Gentleman had accepted that suggestion, he might have found a new source of revenue which would have relieved him at present.

But the chief criticism he had to make on the right hon. Gentleman's proposals was his dealing with the fixed debt charge. That proposal had been met with a chorus of approval and congratulation; but he could only give his congratulation in a very modest degree and to a qualified extent. He asked the right hon. Gentleman why he had not taken the opportunity of dealing with the terminable annuities which fell in next year, and of bringing in a scheme which would have associated his name in a prominent degree with a reform of the finances of the country, and would have conduced very much to the stability of trade? The right hon. Gentleman said that he thought it right to leave that matter to the next Chancellor of the Exchequer, but that was too great a temptation to leave in the hands of any Chancellor of the Exchequer. A bird in the hand was a very tempting thing; and next year the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have in hand £3,000,000 for which the spending Departments and the tax-payer would compete, but which should be applied in reduction of the permanent Debt. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he would so apply it if he held then his present position. He could promise the right hon. Gentleman that they on that side of the House would remind him of his pledge and hold him to it. But human nature was weak; and the weakest form of human nature had lately been incarnated in the shape of recent Chancellors of the Exchequer. What was to prevent the Chancellor of the Exchequer next year, when he had this windfall in his hand, using it for another purpose?

*MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he associated himself with the congratulations which, without exception, had been showered on the head of his right hon. friend. He could not help thinking—while sitting listening attentively to his right hon. friend—that there was one whose voice, alas, they would never hear any more, who would have associated himself with those congratulations; because if there was one principle more than another which the late Sir William Harcourt pressed on the House of Commons it was the urgent and constant necessity of increasing the resources of this country by the diminution of debt. If he might be pardoned preferring his own opinion he would say that the one feature which more than anything else stood out as deserving of commendation in the right hon. Gentleman's statement, was his resolution and firm determination to ensure the continuance of the diminution of the Debt which had grown up with enormous, though unavoidable, leaps and bounds. Having said that, he would like to add his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for what he had laid down as to the financial principles which should guide him. Of course they could not expect a Chancellor of the Exchequer—and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman could, if he would—who had spent many valuable years of his public life at the Admiralty—when he got to the Treasury, which was a purifying atmosphere, to propose to sweep away if not the mischievous, certainly the unhappy, arrangements for increasing the Debt by the system of expenditure for naval works. He was surprised to find such an authority on finance as his hon. friend the Member for Poplar make the error of very vehemently reproaching former Chancellors of the Exchequer for the additional expenditure in connection with the naval and military works. Then the hon. Member for Poplar had said that while we were reducing the Debt by £7,500,000 we were increasing it by £9,000,000. His (Mr. Cohen's) reason for viewing that expenditure with indulgence was because they had not to depend on a courageous, but an orthodox, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Whether the right hon. Gentleman liked it or not that expenditure must be extinguished by Votes in Supply and was beyond the control of any Chancellor of the Exchequer. He, therefore, regretted those additions to the liabilities of the country, because they were created, to a certain extent, clandestinely, or, in other words, not in the straightforward and above-board way of adding to the expenditure of the country by Votes of Supply.

They had heard a good deal of the way in which the expenditure of the country was mounting up, but personally he did not look for any great reduction of expenditure. He believed the most powerful influence for reduction was to be found in the propagation of such principles as those laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, as, for example, that of reducing debt by a manner which would not be dependent upon any particular Budget Estimate of any year but would work automatically, and would ensure that when these repeated claims for expenditure were put forward the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say, "You can have them all, provided that you pay for them by additional taxation." He rejoiced in the restoration of the £28,000,000 to the service of the Debt. They knew it was only reverting to the figures of Sir Stafford Northcote, when the Debt was much smaller and the expenditure very much less lavish than it was now. He thought those two alterations in the consideration of the case might render more, and not less, obligatory the rigid appropriation of a minimum of £28,000,000 at a time of peace, and he believed and hoped, of prosperity.

The hon. Member for Poplar had called attention to the fact that we were buying Consols and at the same time were selling £1,000,000 worth from the unclaimed dividends. As a member of the Public Accounts Committee he knew that the Government, when it sold and bought the same article at the same time, generally did so at a loss to the Exchequer. He would be glad to hear how the Chancellor of the Exchequer arranged the selling and buying of Consols. If the right hon. Gentleman could do these things for himself, it would be a great advantage to the Exchequer, because he knew that Stock Exchange members gained an advantage when a Minister appeared there both as buyer and seller. The right hon. Gentleman merited congratulations in having framed his Budget not to court popularity, but in such a way as to protect him, not only from himself, but from any future Chancellor of the Exchequer who would be obliged to redeem £1,000,000 of Exchequer bonds a year—thereby strengthening the credit of the country, and rendering it more sound, more stable, because more free from incursion.

Mr. HARWOOD (Bolton) ventured to say that the national balance-sheet was presented to the House, and through the House to the country, on a system which would not be tolerated by any business firm in the country. On a previous occasion he had been told that Mr. Gladstone had sanctioned the system. If that were so he was still sorry to say that he differed from it because a great deal of misunderstanding and foolish talk arose from employing a wrong method of rendering a balance-sheet. The national expenditure consisted of two things—they had to keep the nation going and had to pay for its Army and Navy; but the nation ran other businesses, such as the Post Office and the Telegraphs. That expenditure ought not to be included in the national expenditure, but should be kept absolutely distinct. A business man would keep a separate account and only bring the profit or loss into the general account, but in this national balance-sheet they had on one side the Post Office receipts and on the other side they had the expenditure. If the State took over the railways, the expenditure would be jumped up by £100,000,000 and it would be perfectly absurd to call that national expenditure. They were told that the national expenditure was £141,000,000, but £14,000,000 was required for the Post Office and Telegraphs, out of which a profit of £5,000,000 was made, and the expenditure was consequently £127,000,000. They ought to know exactly from year to year the proper amount of the expenditure of the nation. He asserted that there ought to be a separate account for each separate business of the State, a Post Office account, a telegraph account, and so forth. He remembered when the Telegraphs were taken over by the nation, when according to the form of book-keeping the expenditure jumped up nearly £5,000,000, although it had not really done anything of the sort. The nation was now going to take over the telephone system, and he supposed under the present form of book-keeping the expenditure would go up another £5,000,000. It was not generally known that out of the Post Office the nation made £6,000,000, whilst the Telegraphs was a losing business. What was wanted was a separate account for each business so that we could put our finger on the losing businesses and see whether we could not stop or reduce those losses. When we took over the telephones we ought to have a separate account for them so that we could see whether we were losing or gaining. What the nation really wanted in these Estimates was to know what it was spending for national purposes, what were the national purposes on which it was making the expenditure, and whether that expenditure was going up or down in future years. The figures now were quite useless. They wanted to know what the Army, the Navy, and the Civil Service—what all those things which were necessary for running a nation—amounted to altogether; and, secondly, they wanted to know how each separate business was going on. He, therefore, asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give those reasonable facilities which were necessary for this purpose in order that a great deal of the confusion and misunderstanding that now existed might be cleared away.

Mr. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) associated himself with the remarks of the hon. Member who had just sat down as to the manner in which these Estimates had been presented to the House. He heartily congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on his most able but unsensational Budget, especially on the part in which he had allocated so much money to the reduction of the National Debt. He did not altogether agree with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Dumbartonshire in regard to the taxation of food. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to taking something off tea, although he himself had a kindly feeling in favour of a remission of the taxation on sugar. He thought, however, the benefits which were derived from a reduction on tea very nearly counterbalanced those which would be obtained from a reduction on sugar. No doubt there would be some heartburning because nothing had been taken off the income-tax. It was quite a mistake to suppose that the income-tax only hit the rich; those whom it hit hardest were that large body of the community, the clerks. Another bad effect of that income-tax was the large amount of capital it drew from new businesses, but under the present conditions he thought the right hon. Gentleman was quite unable to reduce this tax. He hoped, however, that later on in the debate a Motion would be moved in favour of a graduated income-tax. There were a great many arguments in favour of such a departure, and he for one would rejoice to see a difference made in favour of incomes earned as against those derived from investments.

Another point to which he wished to call attention was the flotation of Consols. When Lord Goschen, in 1888, passed his scheme for the conversion of the National Debt, it was received with great acclaim, but he had never been able himself to see the benefit derived from that transaction. True, the nation derived £1,500,000 taxation from it, but the ultimate result had been that the taxpayer paid less taxation because he received less on his Consols, while the scheme at the same time had had the effect of reducing the stability of the National Debt. The effect of that reduction of the interest payable on the National Debt gave rise to the wildest speculation. The flotations in 1886 amounted to £90,000,000 odd, and two years later to £150,000,000. There was the Argentine boom, followed by the Baring crisis, the South African boom, the cycle boom, and the most fruitful result of the conversion was a plenteous crop of Jabez Balfours, Hooleys, and Whitaker Wrights. He thought that it would be better for the country if Consols were still 2¾ instead of 2½, and he hoped eventually to see the interest raised to the original 3 per cent. They had now Consols, the war loan, and the Irish loan all carrying different rates of interest, and he hoped that some future Chancellor of the Exchequer would at some time come to the House and say that it would be better for the nation and better for the people to revise these matters and put all these loans on the same basis.

Mr. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) regretted that the Estimates did not show as large a reduction as the Committee had a right to expect. The House during the war willingly provided the necessary sums for its prosecution, and naturally when it was over they looked for a reduction in the charges for the maintenance of the services. The Prime Minister ought to have insisted upon a more moderate expenditure, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have curbed the extravagance of the various Departments. The Secretary of State for War had held out hopes of far greater economies than had yet been effected. It had been shown to be possible to make a reduction in the charges for the Navy, and why was it not possible in the Army? It was absolutely necessary to adopt the homely idea of cutting one's coat according to the cloth at one's disposal, and the people were not willing to bear as heavy burdens in time of peace as they were in time of war. The process of balancing income and expenditure was an interesting one, but one of the first concerns of the Government should be to consider the extent of that expenditure, and the country had a right to complain that, although there was a slight remission of taxation, the relief was not considerably larger. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had evidently learnt the lesson of his last Budget. The £1,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman took from unclaimed dividends, instead of being applied to the ordinary expenditure of the year, ought to have gone to the reduction of debt. He would be glad to hear at what price the Consols connected with that operation were sold. With the Sinking Fund proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Opposition would cordially agree. They were anxious to see the national credit stand high, and the Chancellor's proposals tended in that direction. He was glad that the tea duties had been reduced, though he regretted that the amount available did not allow of a larger reduction. He was glad to hear that the drink bill had been diminished, and, although it meant less revenue to the Exchequer, the spending of the money in other directions would doubtless mean greater prosperity and happiness in the country. The everyday life and comfort of the people would be improved by still further reduction of taxation, and to that object he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would turn his attention.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The debate may presently be directed more particularly to the tax which is the subject of the Resolution before the Committee, and before the discussion is narrowed down in that way it may be for the convenience of the Committee that I should reply on the general discussion which by consent has taken place on this Resolution. In reference to the tea tax, I would only say that I do not share the fear of my hon. friend below the gangway that the relief now given will not reach even the smallest consumer. I think it will reach him, if not in money, in improved quality of tea; I am hopeful that the competition which exists will be sufficient to secure that the relief should go, either in better quality or in lower price, to the consumers in the country. The hon. Member for Dumbartonshire made some interesting observations. No doubt the advantages of tea can be exaggerated, but I do not go so far as my hon. friend in regarding tea as an insidious and deleterious article of food. At any rate, I hope the course apparently recommended upon certain posters now decorating the hoardings will not be followed, and that now the duty is lowered tea will not be made an ordinary article of infants' food. I share the regret—no one more than I—expressed by my hon. friend for North Islington that there is no relief for the income-tax payer in this Budget.

Unlike the hon. Member for Poplar, I do not consider that the balance in recent years has been to the disadvantage of the indirect taxpayer. On the contrary, it has been greatly to his advantage, and at the present time the scale is in his favour and presses unfairly against the direct taxpayer. The hon. Member added up the amounts estimated to be received from each addition of taxation, direct or indirect; subtracted one total from the other, and arrived at the result that the indirect taxpayer is contributing a greater proportion than he used to. That is a very misleading method. The hon. Member misleads himself when he makes a calculation on that basis. The only way in which you can make the comparison fairly is to take the respective proportions of the total taxation borne by the two classes of taxpayer. Yesterday in my Budget statement I compared the respective estimated yields of direct and indirect taxes with the actual results, and showed how that, owing to the falling off in the receipts from various sources of indirect taxation, the indirect taxpayer had contributed a smaller, and, consequently, the direct taxpayer a larger, proportion than I had expected. The proportions last year, according to my Budget Estimates, were 51·8 per cent. from indirect taxation, excluding the coal duty and stamps, and 48·2 per cent. from direct taxation. The actual yield was approximately only 50·9 per cent. from indirect and 49·1 per cent. from direct taxation.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): Does that include the amount raised from local taxation?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, and on my Budget Estimate for the present year indirect taxes fall to 49·8 per cent. while direct taxes rise to 50·2 per cent. Although it was not framed to produce that result, my Budget scheme of last year assigned exactly the same proportions to direct and indirect taxation as were estimated for in the year before the war. It will be seen, therefore, that the position of the indirect taxpayer is not less, but more, favourable than before the war, and, in my opinion, it is the direct taxpayer who has the greater right to complain of the present distribution of the burden. If it had been a question this year between the relief of the indirect taxpayer and the relief of the direct taxpayer, I think still, as I thought and said last year, that the latter would have had the first claim to consideration. But I regarded it as my first duty to make a greater provision for the reduction of debt, and when I had taken the sum which I thought sufficient, but not more than sufficient, for that purpose, the money remaining available for the remission of taxation was insufficient to give the income-tax payer relief even to the extent of 1d. I commend that comparison to the attention of the Committee; I think it is a much more accurate one than the method of comparison adopted by the hon. Member for Poplar, and I only need to add, in order to make my views complete upon this subject, that I think, although we have been accustomed to make these comparisons from year to year, and they may serve some useful purpose, that it should always be remembered that the distinction between direct and indirect taxpayers is wholly artificial. Whilst there are indirect taxpayers who do not pay direct taxes, there are no direct taxpayers who do not pay indirect taxes. My hon. friend the Member for Islington said that amongst those most worthy of consideration when we are recasting our financial arrangements are the small payers of income-tax, upon whom probably, in spite of the abatements, the income-tax falls with sensible force, and who also have to make very great contributions to indirect taxation.

Hon. Members on the other side of the House have not subjected my Budget proposals to any severe criticisms. They have, in fact, rather directed their remarks over my head or through me to those whom I may call my spending colleagues. They have claimed that I do not exercise a sufficient restraining influence upon them, and when I appear at this Table they say that I do not speak with sufficiently bated breath about the enormous amount of our expenditure, or dwell upon the urgent need for a reduction with the force and with the frequency which have been common with some of my predecessors. I said last year, and I repeated it yesterday, that I see no advantages in taking this course whilst the expenditure is on the increase. I think it is the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide for the expenditure which, in his opinion, and in the opinion of the Government, is requisite for the service and safety of the country. I often find it my duty inside this House and outside the House to criticise proposals for expenditure. Sometimes the House listens to me and sometimes it does not. What passes between myself and my colleagues is our affair alone, and I do not pretend to reveal the secrets of our discussions here. I only say that if I did not believe that the expenditure embodied in our Estimates was necessary it would not be possible for me to continue to hold the position that I do. It must be my duty to scan that expenditure closely and to secure for the taxpayer, as far as it is in my power to do so, good value for the money expended, and to see that I do not provide more money than is necessary. I do not, however, regard it as any part of my duty, as the guardian of the national finances, to reject proposals for expenditure, merely because they involve expenditure, without regard to their merits or necessity for the defence or improvement of the country.

The main point of this Budget is the proposed addition to the fixed debt charge and the measures which I have brought forward for reducing the Unfunded Debt. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have not seriously criticised these proposals except from the point of view that good as they are, they would have been better if they had been larger, and the hon. Member for Poplar, speaking from the front Opposition bench with all the authority that that position gives him, came very near to pledging those of his colleagues who act with him that when they came into power they would still further raise the fixed debt charge. I shall be interested in the future to see whether they carry out that pledge should circumstances happen to transfer them to this side of the House, and when the future Chancellor of the Exchequer will have to consider all the questions that are now brought before me. All I can say is that if I find that they are inclined to go further than the course which I have now taken, I do not think they will find a very hostile critic in the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. But, Sir, I think the Committee should know what we are proposing for the reduction of debt. The hon. Member for Poplar in th statement which he made to the Committee fell into an error which has been noticeable in more than one speech made in our debates, namely, that he took no account whatever of the Sinking Fund which is specially attached to the debt created for the works charged to capital account. Sir, that Sinking Fund is on a scale out of all proportion to the Sinking Fund attached to the ordinary debt. Hardly any of that Debt extends over a period of more than thirty years, and the Sinking Fund is such as to reduce the whole of it within that time. I estimate that the Sinking Fund which is provided outside the fixed debt charge and in the Votes of the various Departments was in 1904–5, £1,204,000. I estimate that in the present year it will be £1,683,000, and that sum has to be added to the amount of the Sinking Fund included in the fixed debt charge amounting to £8,428,000. Therefore the total amount available for the extinction of debt in the present year should be no less than £10,111,000. I think that is an adequate provision to make for the redemption of our debt, large as that debt is, and I think I should have been unduly tempting my successors if I had adopted the suggestions which have been pressed upon me from some quarters as to applying the whole surplus to increasing the fixed debt charge without giving any relief of any kind to the taxpayer. I am all for a high Sinking Fund, and all for a big fixed debt charge, but I think there is some danger in pressing that principle too far, for by so doing you may make the Sinking Fund a burden so great that you may produce a reaction in the minds of the taxpayers which would undo the work you had done, and thus fail to achieve the very result which you wish to accomplish.

Sir, I will say one word in reply to the hon. Member opposite. All I need to say is that if he would do me the honour to read the second speech I made yesterday in answer to some observations made by the hon. Member for Edinburgh, he would see that I dealt with the criticisms he made upon me to-day for not dealing this year with the terminable annuities which fall in next year, and that I have shown that, whatever be the merits of establishing new terminable annuities in preference to reducing debt in other ways, the particular course which he invited me to pursue as being one that would connect my name favourably with the finances of the country would not in my opinion reduce a penny more debt than the other ways which I have adopted. There are some hon. Members to whom the system of terminable annuities has a great charm and mystery, but if they understood more exactly their working they would attach less reverence to that particular method, and they would see that it is only one way which may or may not be the best one of obtaining the result which they desire.

There are a couple of Questions put by the hon. Member for Poplar as to the sale of Consols held on the unclaimed dividend account. I cannot give the figures because I have not got them with me, but if the hon. Member will put a Question on the Paper I shall no doubt be able to supply the information. No part of those Consols was sold in the market, but they were bought on account of another account by the National Debt Commissioners. The hon. Gentleman also asked for some information as to the yield of the increased duty on stripped tobacco last year. I estimate that I received from that source, after the Budget concession which reduced my proposed duty to one-half, on account of all stocks about £400,000 in the course of the year. The hon. Gentleman also asked me whether it was not the case that the importation of strips had very largely fallen off since the imposition of the duty. Certainly it has. It was part of my contention that the old scale of duties favoured strips unfairly to the disadvantage of whole leaf, and of course, if there was anything in that contention, as I still hold there was, the readjustment of the duty would naturally result in a larger importation of whole leaf and a smaller importation of strips. But apart altogether from that, I should add that the importation of strips is one thing and the consumption of strips in the course of a year is another thing; and the falling off in the consumption of strips in this country was very much less than the falling off in their importation. That is natural, and was the necessary result of the concession which I made for strips already in bond at the date of the introduction of the Budget, because any strips which are now imported are not coming in at 3s. 3d. merely in competition with whole leaf at 3s., but they are strips coming in at 3s. 3d. in competition with other strips at 3s. 1½d.; and, as the House knows, there was a very large stock of strips on hand at the time the new duty was imposed, of which rather more than one-third passed into consumption in the course of the past year, still leaving a very large number in this favoured position. It will not be until they have been very much more largely worked off that we shall be able to say what the result of the duty will be on the future course of the trade.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked at what figure the right hon. Gentleman estimated the receipts from the taxation of last year, and whether it was not a fact that the imported strips had fallen off.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I can get for the hon. Gentleman the whole of the figures. If he tells me that he has refreshed his memory lately as to the fact I will take it from him. There has been an enormous falling off in the importation of strips. This is natural. Why should anyone import strips at 3s. 3d. when there are large stocks in the country ready to come into consumption with a duty of 3s. 1½d.? All the strips at present on hand have a preference of 1½d., and it cannot be expected that strips will be imported as long as the stock of them is sufficient.

The hon. Member for Bolton raised a question which he has raised before in regard to the form of our national accounts. The hon. Gentleman speaks with great independence, disregarding every authority. He does not mind what Mr. Gladstone said; he holds his own view. He does not mind what the hon. Member for King's Lynn says, although he holds to Mr. Gladstone's idea. There are really two schools of thought on this subject. The hon. Member for Bolton, and those who think with him, would like to assimilate our form of national accounts to those of any business concern. There is a great deal to be said for that, and I have very great sympathy with the desire. I think it does mislead the House, and certainly the country, that the total expenditure is put on one side, and the revenue from the Post Office on the other side, of the accounts, and although profits grow year by year, not perhaps so much as we should like to see them, yet our expenditure is shown in a way which represents it to the taxpayer as if he were paying more taxes. The expenditure due to this cause is lumped in with the total and represented as being due to increased provision for naval and military purposes. I think that is a misconception fostered by the present form of accounts, and if I had to frame the accounts for the first time I do not think I should be inclined myself to frame them in the way they are now. But the present form has high authority behind it. It is the form which our accounts have taken for many years, and there is always a certain disadvantage in altering the form of accounts because it is apt to confuse the comparisons with previous years. Against the opinion of the hon. Gentleman and those who think with him, I have to balance the opinion of the hon. Member for King's Lynn and those who agree with him, that the present form is the right one, and that we ought actually to go further in the same direction. The hon. Member for King's Lynn makes it a complaint that every appropriation-in-aid does not in the same way appear on both sides of the account. We carry out, let me say, the service for some petty loan. We advance £1,000 and receive it back. According to some hon. Gentlemen that ought to be shown in a separate suspense account, and ought not to enter into our balance-sheet at all. According to the hon. Member for King's Lynn the taxpayers will not know the true state of affairs until it is first added to the expenditure and then the revenue, and appears on both sides of the account. Who shall decide when doctors disagree? I am not by any means wedded to the present way of presenting the accounts. I have shown that by adopting the form of circular which was this year placed in the hands of Members when the Budget was introduced, and which I owe to the hon. Member for Exeter, to whom I think the Committee are indebted in this matter. I know that if I attempt to introduce changes without the general consensus of opinion behind them, however desirable in my opinion or that of hon. Gentlemen, there would arise great opposition, and a great expenditure of time would be caused. I think the Public Accounts Committee have some right to be consulted in these matters. Any expression of opinion from them would, of course, always receive my serious attention, and if they thought it well to recommend a change such as the hon. Gentleman proposes I should at any rate feel that that was some further inducement to incur the risk of criticism and of condemnation by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. I hope if we are to have a discussion with special reference to the tea tax the general discussion may now be allowed to close, so that we may take that special discussion before half-past seven.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) moved that the tea duty be reduced to 4d. instead of 6d. as proposed by the Chancellor the Exchequer. The Committee would be perfectly justified in further reducing the tax, and in bringing it back to the sum at which it stood before the war. The hon. Member for Dumbartonshire had dilated at considerable length on the evil effects of tea-drinking, and suggested that Scotch broth should be adopted in place of tea as an article of diet. Scotch broth was no doubt an excellent diet, but it would be inconvenient for working people who used tea because they could carry it with them to their places of employment, where of necessity they must drink it cold. He would not argue this subject at length, but he did contend that tea was an article of necessity in the homes of the people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that many people who paid indirect taxation did not pay any direct taxation. That was undoubtedly true, but was it not a great misfortune to the people who did not pay direct taxation? Many people would be delighted to be in the position of having to pay income-tax. He would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that although the workers did not pay income-tax, they stood in a wholly different relationship to the State from that in which the richer portion of the community stood. The worker every hour of his working life was contributing to the maintenance of the State, and without him the State would soon become a thing of the past. The workers suffered in many ways. In the recent bad times thousands of them suffered from want of employment. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer should again feel inclined to argue that the workers escaped direct taxation he should remember that by their labours they made a great contribution to the maintenance of the State. Therefore, they were entitled to wholly different consideration from that which was given to the people who paid income-tax. He agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the income tax in its present form was a great burden to a large number who now had to pay it. He could bear witness to the fact that many people paid income-tax who really were not liable for it, and who would be exempted if their case was thoroughly examined and properly put before the Income-Tax Commissioners. He hoped that the results of the labours of the Committee appointed last year to consider this great question would be to protect people of limited incomes from the imposition of heavy burdens.

The tax on tea was now, in some cases, upwards of 100 per cent. on its wholesale value. That was an enormous tax to levy on an article of everyday use, chiefly among the poor, and ought not to be allowed to pass. It ought at least to be brought down to the amount at which it stood in the ante-war period, viz., 4d. per pound. Some years back the right hon. Member for West Bristol, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, made him a conditional promise that he would go into the question of taxing tea on its value. Why not tax tea according to its value instead of according to its bulk or weight? He hoped the Chancellor would consider what could be done in that direction. It might be said that his proposal would reduce the Chancellor's revenue by a million and a half. He was, of course, not called upon to make good the deficiency. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer had graciously consented to select the next Chancellor from the Opposition Penches; but it was rather unkind of him to make arrangements somewhat in advance of the occasion. He could not expect to be that Chancellor, and therefore it was not for him to point out how the Chancellor could recompense himself for reducing the tea duty to 4d. But there was a very simple way. The Exchequer might be recouped by a reduction of expenditure. The Chancellor might turn his attention to his colleagues' extravagance in Pall Mall. It would be a much more difficult thing to reduce the efficiency of the gentlemen there than their extravagant expenditure, because they had a notorious habit of spending money without giving the nation adequate results. He might also consider the question of taxing ground rents. In the Metropolis alone an income of several millions was obtained from this source.

HON. MEMBERS on the MINISTERIAL Benches: They pay income-tax already.

MR. BROADHURST said they paid income-tax on their gross income, but here would be an additional source to tax. Other sources of revenue could be obtained from pure luxuries and extravagance of living. The whole object of taxation should be to make all classes bear an equal sacrifice according to their position and the means at their disposal.

Amendment proposed—

In line 5, to leave out the words "six pence," and insert the words "four pence."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'six pence' stand part of the proposed Resolution."

*MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) said that the hon. Member for Leicester had stated that the duty on certain kinds of tea was 100 per cent. of its value; but the hon. Gentleman had understated the case. It was considerably over 100 per cent. The tea most used by the working people was sold wholesale at from 4½d. to 5d. per ℔, and on that a duty of 8d. per ℔. had been paid last year. But that was not the only pressure put on the working classes, for they had to pay duty on the tea, and then also the percentage of profits on the whole price of the goods which had been increased in price by the duty. That was one of the evils of all indirect taxation; and a man who bought a tea originally sold at 4½d. per pound had to pay for it 15d. or 16d. per pound, whereas the man who bought a high-class tea at 4s. per pound paid a much smaller proportion of the duty compared with the working man. If some hon. Members would only visit the towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire they would see hundreds and thousands of tins containing tea being carried to the workpeople two and three times daily, which showed the extent to which the beverage was consumed, and they would realise that a duty of even 6d. per pound was exceedingly heavy upon them. To impose the same duty on every quality of tea might be paralleled by levelling the same tax on every house in a town of, say, 20,000 inhabitants—whether it was a poor man's house or a rich man's house with three or four times the accommodation. He did not believe in what was called the relative proportion of direct and indirect taxation, for indirect taxation always carried with it a double burden, as it involved a taxation on profits as well as on original cost.

Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said it had been suggested that the tax on tea should be graduated according to the price paid for it. To a large number of people tea had now become an article of luxury, and many paid as much as four or five shillings a pound for it. A graduated tax should be put upon tea, and the burden of the tax would then fall on the shoulders of those who were well able to bear it.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) thought the Amendment could not possibly be agreed to because the finances of the country would not bear it. It seemed to him that the right state of things in regard to indirect taxation would be reached when they got back to the condition prevailing before the war, and when there was no taxation on articles of universal consumption except such as were regarded as a luxury. He was afraid that he must class tea as a luxury, and he was of opinion that the quantity of tea and bread now given to children contributed very largely to the physical deterioration of the rising generation. The habit of drinking tea and eating bread and butter had lately been condemned by every hygienic authority. One of the causes of the great increase of insanity in Ireland was the practice of feeding children with tea and bread and butter in that part of the country. Tea and bread and butter did not furnish the materials required for the building up of bone in children. He did not put sugar in the same category. It was true that they could not feed a child on sugar alone, but in conjunction with other articles it was an extremely wholesome food, and he hoped to see the day when it would be untaxed, as it was in former days. No doubt it was an article of general consumption which in times of emergency, such as war and when the whole population of the country was called upon to make a sacrifice, might be taxed, but in times of peace it ought to be the object of every Government to free sugar from taxation as early as it could possibly be done, having regard to the due maintenance of finance. It was no part of the duty of a Government to say to the country what luxuries should be indulged in. That decision must be left to the people and whether the Government approved or not of the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, or tea, their feelings should not influence their minds on the subject of taxation. They might look to the taxation of those articles as reasonable incidents in the raising of the Revenue. He hoped the tax on tea might be further reduced as soon as the financies of the country would permit.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said even a small amount of duty fell upon the consumer. He did not agree with the view of reducing the tea duty instead of the sugar duty. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had granted a reduction in the sugar tax he would have conferred an enormous advantage upon the country. He believed that, owing to the Sugar Convention, sugar held a totally different position to that which it held before. The Continental countries willingly contracted themselves out——

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The question of sugar does not arise on this Amendment. The hon. Member must confine himself to tea.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) understood that by the arrangement of the previous night a general discussion was to be allowed.

*The CHAIRMAN pointed out that this Amendment must be disposed of before a general discussion could take place.

Mr. CAWLEY said he desired to argue that sugar had a much greater claim to reduction than tea but in deference to the Chairman's ruling he would not continue his argument. He would at another time point out to the Chancellor the Exchequer the grave danger to the country likely to accrue if the sugar tax were not reduced.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY of the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) said that owing to the exigencies of the case the Government was unable to accept the Amendment.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the question of an *ad valorem* duty on tea had been raised by the hon. Gentleman on more than one occasion. He did not think the hon. Gentleman was aware how great would be the difficulty in imposing an *ad valorem* duty. They heard a great deal of comment regarding the high *ad valorem* rate which the tax bore to the value of the article. He did not think the way in which that argument was used was always honest or frank because he did not know among those using it any one who was in favour of an *ad valorem* duty. He recently received a very influential deputation of the trade which touched lightly on the proportion of the duty to the value, and he put the question to them direct—would they like him to impose an *ad valorem* duty? They did not give him a definite answer at first but told him it would be impossible to collect such a duty, and subsequently they begged of him with all the emphasis at their command not to do it. They pointed out that it tended to penalise the higher class article; to force the consumption of the lower grade and to restrict the consumption of the higher grade teas. He did not know whether much tea was sold at the prices named by the hon. Gentleman opposite, but he could assure him that it was by no means a universal fact that poor people or the working classes drank the worst tea. Some time ago he had occasion to examine some Irish budgets which were familiar to members of the Congested Districts Board, and he wanted the amounts respectively spent on tea and tobacco. There was no estimate set out of the quantities, and he consulted an hon. Member from Ireland as to what he thought would be a fair price to charge upon the tea which was consumed in that country. The hon. Member replied that he could not answer the question off-hand, but it might be taken for certain that the poor Irish peasant generally drank a good tea and would not be put off with poor rubbish. Accordingly an *ad valorem* duty might not result in bringing relief to that particular class to which the hon. Gentleman was anxious to give it. But even if it were not open to that objection there would be an enormous difficulty in imposing a duty in that form. Sales of tea no longer took place as formerly in the sale rooms. Some of the great distributors now had their own tea gardens and imported their own tea. In 1834–35 there was an attempt to graduate the duty and there were three rates, 1s. 6d., 2s. 2d., and 3s., respectively, but the discrimination then in force would not be applicable in the circumstances of to-day. That attempt to graduate the tea duty really broke down because the Customs authorities of that time found it impossible properly to distinguish between the different teas, and whatever theoretical attractions it might have to the hon. Gentleman it would prove to be harassing and annoying to the trade. It would require them to intrust an enormous discretion to the Customs authorities which could not be exercised without criticism, and might in the end result in the poor people having to pay a far higher price for their tea than they did now.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 249; Noes, 184. (Division List No. 131.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel.
Allsopp, Hon. George.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. SirH.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Rt. HnGeraldW(Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.Col. H.F(Middlesex)
Bowles, T.Gibson(King'sLynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, John George.
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J.A(Glasgow)
Campbell, J.H.M (DublinUniv.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J.A(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt.Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, SirT.R.(TowerHamlets)
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt.Hn.SirJoseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, SirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H
Finlay, SirR.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir AugustusFrederick
Gordon, Hn J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Greene, Sir EW.(BuryEdm'nds)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley)
Heath, Sir James(StaffordsNW
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H(Somers't,E
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John(Kent, Faversh'm
Howard, J. (Midd. Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James HenryCecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kennaway, Rt.Hn.SirJohn H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn. Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, SirJoseph (Monm'th
Lawson, Hn.H L W. Mile End)
Lawson, JohnGrant(York.N.R.
Lee, ArthurH(Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W(Evesham)
Long, Rt Hn Walter(Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C.(Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis(Edinburgh, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir HE(Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W.J.H(Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon.J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray, C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)

Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Sir Harry (S Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith, RtHn.JParker(Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W.F.D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon.Rt.Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir MarkJ.M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.HnJG(Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col.Sir C E.H(Sheffield
Welby, Lt.-Col.A C E(Taunton)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E. R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B.Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsay(Galw'y
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C(SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander(LanarkNE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt Hn Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Sw'nsea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennedy, P. J. (Westmeath, N
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, SirJosephF.(Accrington
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(RoscommonN.
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Seely, Maj. J.E.B. (Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James

Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.CR.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.
Tillett, Louis John
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, ArthurWalters(NDorset
Wilson, Fred.W(Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, HenryJ.(York, W. R.)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse, Sir JT(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Channing.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. CAWLEY, in calling attention to the effect of the sugar duty, pointed out that at the time of the imposition of that duty Continental countries had of their own free will contracted themselves out of certain industries because by giving bounties they had so raised the price of sugar within their own boundaries that it was impossible for their people to go into businesses which had wonderfully thrived in this country. Under these circumstances, the position with regard to the sugar duty now was very different compared with that at the time of its imposition, and he could not see how our confectionery manufacturers could carry on their business unless the sugar duty was taken off or the Convention denounced. As the Convention could not at present be denounced, he submitted that the duty ought to be repealed. The confectionery trade had grown up under a system of protection of the very best kind—protection at other people's expense. The bounties had enabled our manufacturers to obtain their raw material cheaply, and the consumer also had benefited. But the Germans were now relieved of their bounties; the price to the German consumer was as low as in this country, and, Germany being the largest grower of beet sugar, the German manufacturers would have the advantage which accrued to the producers of the raw material. The result, unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer saw his way to repeal the duty, would doubtless be to reduce our confectionery trade by at least one-half. All British manufacturers wanted were even terms, but these they would not have under existing circumstances. The reduction of the sugar duty might well be advocated on the ground that sugar was a food of the poor, but for the moment he urged that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give his attention to the aspect of the case as it affected the confectionery trade, otherwise some thousands of hands might be thrown out of employment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The speech to which we have just listened is a remarkable one as coming from that side of the House. The hon. Member practically states that the trade for which he is expressing anxiety has been protected, and that unless that protection is renewed large numbers of workmen will be thrown out of employment.

MR. CAWLEY regretted he had not made himself better understood. What he said was that the industry had been protected at other people's expense, and what he wanted was that the raw material should be brought into the country duty free, the raw material not being grown here, in order that our manufacturers might be on equal terms with other people.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think the hon. Member's explanation corrects my statement to any appreciable extent. He ascribes the prosperity of the trade to the fact that it was protected. He says it was at other people's expense. Undoubtedly it was—partly at the expense of the foreigner and partly at the expense of other industries in this country. The hon. Member further says that the trade cannot continue to exist in any condition of prosperity unless either the Convention is denounced or the present duty of 4s. 2d. per hundredweight repealed.

Of course, the denunciation of the Convention will bring no advantage whatever to the trade unless it results in the restoration of the protection which the hon. Member desires.

MR. CAWLEY: At other people's expense.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: We have often tried to find out what really was the point of view of hon. Members opposite in regard to bounties, and from the hon. Member at any rate we have now had a clear statement. He would consider it the duty of any British Government to stimulate the granting of bounties by foreign countries. If bounties are good for raw sugar they are equally good for confectionery. And why should not the consumer of the articles have the advantage of the bounty? And why should not the manufacturer on the Continent have the advantage which the producer of the raw material has hitherto had? You cannot defend these bounties in regard to one article without defending them in regard to all articles, and it would be interesting to see the condition of trade which would be introduced if the hon. Member had his way, and extended among our competitors a general system of bounties upon all goods which compete with our home-made productions. The hon. Member has rightly said that the Convention cannot be denounced at present. I do not think it is likely to be denounced at any time, unless it has so efficiently done its work that there is not much probability of a recurrence of bounties. That being so, the hon. Member says the confectioners cannot live unless the sugar duty is repealed. Why not? What trade are they going to lose? Their export trade does not suffer. They get a drawback when they export, and are thereby put in the same position for exporting as if there were no duty. Then it is their home trade. But why? This duty is not confined to articles manufactured in this country. Imported confectionery has to pay the same duty as has been charged on the sugar used in the manufacture of confectionery here. Accordingly, as far as the home trade is concerned, the British manufacturer of confectionery is on those equal terms which the hon. Member desires, and which he in the same breath declares are not sufficient to preserve the industry from extinction; whilst in regard to the foreign trade, by reason of the drawback, he is at no disadvantage whatever. The hon. Member says that our home manufacturer will be at a great disadvantage because an enormous amount of sugar is produced in Germany, whereas none is grown here. But he does not press that to the logical conclusion to which I should have thought his protectionist theories would have driven him, and suggest that the same encouragement should be given to the producer of beet in this country as has existed in Germany. What he does suggest is that the growing of sugar by Germany will give the German manufacturers of confectionery an unfair advantage in competition with our own manufacturers unless the duty is removed. The idea that a particular price of Germany is a world's price is rather a peculiar one, and the hon. Member will find little commercial or economic authority for that theory.

MR. CAWLEY made a remark which was inaudible in the Press Gallery

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member should not interrupt with an observation which is entirely irrelevant. The hon. Member's argument was that the price would be lower in Germany because Germany was a sugar-producing country. There is nothing to prevent anybody buying German sugar, and the fact that there is a prohibition of the importation of sugar from the Argentine or Russia does not in the least affect the transfer of sugar from Germany to this country or the fact that the price of sugar is a world's price. It is not relevant to the hon. Member's argument, which was confined to German sugar. It does not affect my statement about the world's price because, although Russian and Argentine sugar does not come here at this moment, it does enter into the world's supply and consumption, and therefore does enter into the world's price. The hon. Member opposite seemed to be under the impression that Germany, unlike ourselves, had no duty upon sugar. ["No."] The hon. Member is also mistaken if he thinks that the duty on sugar is higher in this country than in Germany. If he entertains any idea of that kind he is completely mistaken. Our duty is 4s. 2d., while the duty in Germany is 7s. 1½d.

MR. CAWLEY: But the German manufacturers get a drawback.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Our manufacturers, we are told, cannot compete with the German manufacturers of sugar because they are called upon here to pay a duty of 4s. 2d. which is charged upon all imported confections of sugar, whilst in Germany the manufacturers have to pay 7s. 1½d. I am aware that there is a drawback given on the export of sugared goods from Germany exactly as there is an export duty here, but so far as it enters into competition at all for trade purposes the duty is lower here to-day than it is in Germany. I think I have said enough to show that whatever may be said either for or against a revision of the sugar duties it cannot be urged upon the grounds which the hon. Member opposite has put forward.

*MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer would never persuade any class of manufacturers that to tax their raw material, whatever drawbacks were allowed, left them in as good a position as if it had not been taxed. The German Government was at present endeavouring to arrange for a system of drawbacks to enable English cloth to be imported to make German jackets, but it was found almost impossible, and when it came to be worked out the difficulties of ascertaining how much of the raw material entered into the composition of any particular kind of goods left an opening for the manufacturers to defraud the Government as was done largely in the United States. The difficulty of determining how far the raw material entered into the article left an open field either for defrauding the Government or for putting the manufacturer to a loss which the Government did not compensate him for by means of the drawbacks. Apart, however, from the question of cost, the very great inconvenience and trouble were always hampering conditions to the manufacturer. The fact could not be ignored that sugar had a strong claim for consideration, as not only the food of the people, but also as the raw material not of one industry, but, as had been said over and over again in the House, of many industries. It entered into the production of many articles which did not usually come before them, and which most of them did not know had sugar in their composition. He came up in the train the other day with a rather rabid supporter of the Government who told him that while he considered sugar a proper instrument by which to tax the consumer, it was a most abominable thing to tax it as the raw material of his industry, for he happened to be a manufacturer of an article of which sugar was a raw material. That sort of thing was not confined to one Party. People did not like taxation which hit themselves. With regard to the bounties the position was this: The sugar-using industries of this country had had the advantage and the disadvantage—he would call it a doubtful advantage—of protection, and now that they were brought into open competition with the rest of the world they were to some extent at a disadvantage. There was no doubt that every protected industry, though it might enjoy some advantages, was, like a hothouse plant brought into the open air, weaker for the conditions under which it had lived. It was, however, a protection which at all events had not been to the disadvantage of the consumer in this country. Having had that advantage taken away, their case was one of peculiar hardship that their raw material should be thus doubly hit, and this made the tax on sugar one to be removed as soon as possible.

He did not see why there should not be issued at the time of the Budget a Paper showing in a very brief form of profit and loss the accounts of the Post Office. It should always be recognised that part of the expense of the Post Office was interest on capital and depreciation.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: A Return is published giving the information desired.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR: In the shape of a balance-sheet?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No; as a Return giving the information.

***Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR** said he suggested the Return should take the form of an annual balance-sheet and profit and less account of that Department. It would be a very useful thing, and prevent misconception on the part of the public and the mixing up of one fund with another. Might he make another practical suggestion which would prevent a great amount of misconception, and which would, he believed, tend to economy—that economy which they all professed to desire and so few really tried to promote? The Commissioners of Inland Revenue, when issuing the demand note for income-tax, might give upon it in small epitomised form the amount of the national expenditure to which the taxpayers were called upon to contribute their *quota*. He had long thought that it would be a most useful thing if the taxpayers were informed in this way of the amounts required for the Army and Navy, education, the Civil Service, and other things. This would bring home to the taxpayers the real objects for which the money was paid, in the same way as was done by local authorities. He did not see that the Imperial Government should be above taking a lesson in this matter from the local authorities. This information could be given without incurring any additional cost. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told the Committee that afternoon that he was not personally responsible for the Army and Navy expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman said he saw no advantage in the homilies which Chancellors of the Exchequer sometimes gave while expenditure was increasing. The hon. Member would like a homily from the Chancellor of Exchequer when expenditure was being decreased, and he thought it would be a good thing if the right hon. Gentleman would nail his colours to the mast in the way former Chancellors had done. He hoped if the right hon. Gentleman was still in office next year he would not only give them a homily but an illustration in the reduction of expenditure, because though he might not be responsible for military expenditure he was an important member of the Government which was responsible. The right hon. Gentleman had shown pluck this year in defying the strong feeling not only in the House but in the country in favour of the reduction of the income-tax. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to show a little more pluck and to put more pressure on his colleagues, so that when he brought in another Budget next year he would be able to preach an economical policy and to give better illustrations than he had done this year.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he agreed with the hon. Member opposite that there was nothing more important than that the public accounts should be made intelligible to the ordinary person. They were not so at present. The two suggestions made by the hon. Member would not tend to simplify them. The first suggestion was that the whole of the public expenditure should be printed on the income-tax paper in an epitomised form. The House would remember that the income-tax paper was issued in the autumn of each year and the total expenditure of the country was not and could not possibly be known until March 31st following. Therefore the suggestion of the hon. Member was like a request for six months further credit. If they were to wait until they got the total expenditure they would not pay until March 31st what they ought to pay before December 31st. The hon. Gentleman also suggested that the revenue and expenditure of the Post Office should be put in the form of a balance-sheet. A balance sheet did not show revenue and expenditure; it was a statement of assets and liabilities, which was an entirely different thing. One of the assets of the Post Office was the monopoly right of carrying letters and sending telegrams. That a was good asset, but would the hon. Gentleman suggest the amount at which it should be valued? He submitted that it was impossible for the Post Office to give that kind of balance-sheet. He thought that what the hon. Gentleman meant was a profit and loss account. That was really published already, because there was an account with the receipts on one side and the outlays on the other. It was within his knowledge that the telephone department of the Post Office made an annual loss while the National Telephone Company made a profit. The remarkable thing with regard to the Post Office accounts was that the real effectual revenue came not from the telegraph and telephone sixpences, shillings, and half-crowns, but from the magic penny.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN indicated assent.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer cheered that. He would recommend the penny to the right hon. Gentleman as a great engine of taxation. Any Chancellor of the Exchequer who knew how to use it in the same sort of spirit as it had been used by the Post Office would obtain a large increase of revenue.

He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been quite fair in his treatment of the sugar question. The right hon. Gentleman asked how it was that the sugar manufacturers were suffering and how they could not manufacture now as before. For the simple reason that sugar had doubled in price. The same sugar which formerly cost his constituents 1¼d. per lb. now cost 2½d. With the raw material of this industry so largely increased, it followed as a matter of course that the industry could not be conducted with the same success as before. The remarkable thing was that although it was said the increase in price was due to the shortage of crops the price had not gone up, but had gone down in the other countries which were parties to the Sugar Convention. It was only here, the great sugar market of the world, that the price had gone up. How could they talk of the world's price when they excluded from this market the sugar produced by countries like Spain, Russia, Denmark, the Argentine, and San Domingo? The Argentine was a country from which previously we obtained large quantities of sugar. When a monopoly was given, as in fact was done in this case, this mischief arose. That was what had been the greatest element, in his belief, in the rise in the price of sugar. That was why the confectionery and jam industries had seriously suffered. In his own constituency the import of sugar had enormously declined. Not only was sugar dearer, but a great deal of work had been lost to those who used to unload the sugar and handle it afterwards. It would be an affectation to doubt whether the export of confectionery and other cognate products had not been affected by the Brussels Convention. The right hon. Gentleman knew that by this Convention we had been made slaves of the Brussels Commission composed for the most part of foreigners. It should not be forgotton that an appeal was made by the Government against what we considered the totally unfair methods in which articles manufactured in this country, into the composition of which sugar entered, were treated when exported to the contracting countries. He hoped that that appeal would be successful. The cruel loss to the sugar industries of this country was not due so much to the tax this House had given to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as that we had given a monopoly of the greatest market for sugar in the world to the co-signatories of the Convention, and the result had been most disastrous. He thought that sugar was a very important article of food. It was well known that in cane sugar producing countries every animal, from man downwards, got fat, round, and rubicund when the new crop of sugar came in. The right hon. Gentleman might keep his sugar tax as long as it was necessary for revenue, but he regretted the fetters by which we had unfortunately bound ourselves in consequence of the Sugar Convention, which was contrary to every sound principle of sound finance.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said he would not enter into any discussion of the fiscal aspect of the Sugar Convention. What concerned him was the sugar tax, which was the subject more strictly before the Committee. This sugar duty was imposed by a former Chancellor of the Exchequer as a merely temporary tax, which was to be taken off as soon as the war was over. At the time of the impost he himself protested against the increased burden which it would put upon the people of Ireland. He protested all the more strongly against the tax because it had been imposed in order to carry through the South African War—a war waged against the most sacred sentiment which Irishmen possessed, a war against the liberties of a free people. If this matter was brought to a division he would vote against the tax. Earlier in the evening there was a discussion as to the proportion which direct taxation bore to indirect taxation. It was pointed out that the proportion of indirect to direct taxation was 49 per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in replying, did not tell the Committee that the system of taxation imposed on Irishmen had very different results, because it worked out that the proportion in Ireland of direct to indirect taxation was 37 per cent. That had the result of putting an extreme burden on the poorer population of Ireland. It was time that some Irishmen should protest against such a system of taxation which was largely responsible for the unfortunate economic condition of that country.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) said he wished to know whether any consideration had been given by the Cabinet to the great question of the reform of local taxation. Every four years the Agricultural Rates Continuance Act was passed, which was a great injustice to urban taxpayers.

*The CHAIRMAN: That question is not before the Committee.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY said he wanted to know whether they were to have every four year a continuance of those Bills to which there was so much objection from hon. Members on that side of the House and whether——

*The CHAIRMAN said this did not come within the four corners of the Finance Bill. It was not even a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but came in the province of the Local Government Board.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY begged to think it must be in the province of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would not persist in his arguments, but he thought it a surprising ruling.

*The CHAIRMAN pointed out that a Bill was already before the House and was under the control of the Local Government Board.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY had no desire to argue the question, but would ask whether the whole matter of the reform of our local taxation was under the consideration of the Cabinet, and whether there was any prospect of this great question being dealt with.

*The CHAIRMAN: That is a matter for the Prime Minister.

Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said the present tax on sugar was a serious impost on the food of the people. The money spent on the country had somehow to be raised, and vari us taxes had to be devised. They could not judge in a single year what would be the effect of the Convention upon the supply of sugar in years to come. Already in various cane-growing countries there had been a great stimulus, and they might expect to have sugar supplied in increasing quantities and at a decreasing cost. With regard to Germany——

The CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member was not entitled to discuss the subject of the Sugar Convention. He was entitled to refer to it so far as it influenced the price of sugar in this country, but to go into the whole question would not be relevant to the Question before the Committee.

Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS explained that he was only following an argument raised by an hon. Member who had taken a wrong line. He thought the Government were to be congratulated on the liberal way in which they had dealt with the tea tax. There were a great many persons in his constituency upon whom the burden of the income-tax pressed very hardly. He, for one, sympathised with the income-tax payer in that he had not been chosen by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a subject for relief. The right hon. Gentleman had, however, in his wise discretion, given the relief to the consumers of tea, and they all looked to him to make further remissions when he had further funds in hand.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 247; Noes, 168. (Division List No. 132.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col H. F (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow)
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred: Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)

Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Samuel, Sir HarryS.(Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart,Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sloan, Thomas Henry

Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith,H.C.(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith,Rt Hn J.Parker(Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon.Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.JG(Oxf'd Univ.)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col.Sir C EH(Sheffield)

Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C E.(Taunton
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R.)
Wilson-Todd, SirW.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn.E.R(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, CharlesRamsay(Galw'y
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt.E.C.(SAndrw'sBghs
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney

Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay,Alexander (Lanark,NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharpe
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, P.J.(Westmeath, N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Crae, George
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.

M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph, (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isleof Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer,Rt.Hn.C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)

Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, Sir Frederick (Bristol,N.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Md.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Woodhouse,Sir J.T.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. O'Mara and Mr. MacVeagh.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow to the House.

Committee to sit again to-morrow.

Sitting suspended at 7.28.

EVENING SITTING.

HITCHIN AND DISTRICT GAS BILL
[By Order.]

As amended, considered.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said he respectfully protested against the way in which the local authority of Hitchin had allowed this Bill to go through without protesting in the only way that was open to them, namely, by dividing on the Second Reading as a protest against the way in which this Bill had been treated by the promoters. For the first time for twenty-five years the House of Commons had denied to a big corporation a compulsory purchase clause, and thus denied to the people of Hitchin in the future the right to have their own municipal gas.

Mr. HUDSON (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) said that he had withdrawn his opposition to this measure because he found half the local authority of Hitchin were in favour of leaving matters as they were, and a very large proportion of the inhabitants of the town were still more in favour of it. It was under those circumstances that he withdrew his opposition to the Third Reading of this Bill and, if what the hon. Member for Battersea said was true, then all he could say was that the fault lay with the people of Hitchin and not with him.

Bill to be read the third time.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS' PENSION FUND.

Mr. HAMMOND (Carlow) said in rising to move the Motion which stood in his name he could only regret that the fortune of the ballot had not placed it in more competent hands. He would, however, content himself with a brief review of the question, and his colleague the hon. Member for West Kerry, who was an authority on this matter, would make it quite plain that a serious wrong existed which ought to be remedied, and that the responsibility rested upon the Government to restore this fund to a state of solvency. He only gave expression to the general trend of public opinion in Ireland when he said that the national school teachers in Ireland deserved well of their country. Their work was highly appreciated, and exercised a large and permanent influence for good, and they themselves commanded the respect of the people. There had been, no doubt, in recent years a very great improvement in the position of the national school teachers, who had gained in credit and repute in the same ratio as education had been more highly prized, but under the present conditions they were unable to furnish for themselves adequate provision for their old age, when they could no longer carry on remunerative work. That was the disability under which the national school teachers of Ireland laboured. He contended that in this matter the Government had failed to do its duty. In the year 1879, under the auspices of two distinguished statesmen—Sir Stafford Northcote, at that time the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, then Chief Secretary for Ireland—the National School Teachers Pensions Bill became law. Under the operation of that Act, £1,300,000 taken from the Irish Church Surplus Fund became the nucleus of the pension fund, and when it came into force inducements were held out to the national school teachers to join it, and they were officially informed of the advantages that would accrue, and the amount of contribution they would have to make. The national school teachers, having devoted the best years of their lives to the service of the country, found themselves with not enough to provide for themselves and their families. They were public servants and were entitled to adequate and appropriate pensions on retirement. They deserved well of their country, and what they asked was that the maximum pension should be two-thirds of the maximum salary; that the full pension be optional for men after thirty-five years service and for women after thirty years service; that in case of enforced retirement owing to disablement in body or mind a male teacher should receive a pension of £20 a year, with £1 a year added for every year's service, and a female teacher should receive a pension of £15 per annum, with 13s. 4d. a year added for each year of service; and that all the disablement pensions should be provided by the State.

*MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) said this was no small and unimportant question, whatever it might appear to those who had not considered it. Over £2,000,000 of Irish money was involved, and the provision for the old age of 12,000 Irish national school teachers was concerned. Education in Ireland was a question which was receiving the greatest attention in that country, and unless sufficient money was provided and primary education placed on a proper basis, it was useless to expect there could be any advantage to the country by the most fanciful and best planned schemes. The question of pensions for the teachers had in the past received less attention than it deserved. In 1879 an Act was passed which for the first time established a system of pensions for Irish national school teachers. Previous to that the teachers received on retirement one year's salary for every ten years service, which amount came from the Imperial Treasury. When, however, the Act of 1879 was passed, a sum of £1,300,000 was taken from the Irish Church Fund as a nucleus for the fund, and the British Treasury then ceased to contribute for eighteen years after 1879. A British actuary who had been appointed by the Treasury to look into the working of the fund, had stated that through the action of the Government in ceasing to contribute the fund had lost, and that the Treasury should now contribute £400,000. Although the fund had now grown to £2,200,000, and the balance over, last year, after paying all charges, amounted to £45,000 a year, the actuary appointed by the Treasury had stated that it was a bankrupt fund. The income of this fund was over £100,000 per annum, whilst the payment of pensions accounted for £55,000, which showed a balance in favour of the fund of £45,000 in the year 1903. In the year 1897 the fund possessed a balance of £127,000, yet the Financial Secretary, when asked last February why stock should be sold at a loss of £13,000, replied—

> "Pension stock is occasionally sold in order to enable payments to be made at a time when the receipts of a fund fall short of the amounts necessary for such payments."

which could not be the case when there was a balance of £127,000. He hoped further inquiry would be made into that question.

The Irish national school teachers had contributed during the last twenty years to the fund a large amount of money. The contributions, which commenced with £9,000, now amounted to £25,000, and the teachers during all those twenty years had been asking for an independent actuary, appointed by themselves, to go into this fund and see how it was being administered. When they saw how much was lost or spent it was only natural that the teachers should be suspicious, and if there had not been in the view of the Government something to hide in this matter, he was sure they would have acceded to the request of the teachers. In the year 1885 Mr. Robinson stated that the fund had a balance in its favour of £200,000 and that it was perfectly solvent and that there was no fear of its breaking down. Five years later the same gentleman stated that the fund was £200,000 in arrears. Another gentleman, Mr. Sutton, also appointed by the Treasury, said the balance against the fund was £837,000, and Mr. Finlaison put it at £924,000. Was it not natural under the circumstances that the teachers should inquire what was the cause and ask that they who paid in such a large amount to the fund should have access to what was their own. In 1895 Mr. Robinson put the deficiency at £1,186,000, and Mr. Finlaison stated that this deficiency amounted to £1,200,000. The national teachers of Ireland naturally felt under these circumstances that although they had contributed a considerable share of their limited incomes to this fund there was no possibility when they reached their old age of receiving any pensions

A Departmental Committee was appointed, and it reported and made three suggestions which seemed very characteristic in its injustice to a splendid body of Irishmen. They first of all agreed with the actuaries that the fund was becoming bankrupt, and that something should be done to prevent this. It seemed very strange that instead of recommending the British Treasury to vote an annual sum they shrank from doing so, and declared that it would not be suitable that any money should be given for the teachers' pensions out of the Treasury funds, but that it all should come out of Irish money. Their first suggestion was that the pensions of the men should be reduced from £88 to £60 and that the pensions of the women should be reduced from £63 to £47. Their second suggestion was that the teachers' premiums should be raised from £9,000 to £23,000 per annum, and, thirdly, that the retiring gratuities should be done away with. Those were the recommendations of the Committee which sat in 1897, and he did not think a better instance could be found to illustrate the cheeseparing policy of the British Treasury in regard to Irish affairs. The teachers naturally resented this treatment, because they were under the impression that the British Treasury had entered into an agreement with them that if they paid a certain amount out of their salaries they would get a fixed pension, if they complied with all the conditions laid down. An agreement of that kind between man and man would have been kept, but such an agreement between the British Treasury —which had no soul—and the Irish teachers was shamefully broken by the Treasury. At the time various opinions were obtained and legal authorities were consulted, and amongst others the Solicitor-General for Ireland was consulted, and he stated in regard to the action of the British Treasury that—

> "The rules are illegal from start to finish."

He hoped that the Solicitor-General still held the same opinion, and that he would whisper a kind word into the ear of the Secretary to the Treasury to undo the mischief which had been done to the Irish teachers. In a letter to the *Teachers' Journal* the Solicitor-General wrote—

> "The bargain I say, and say fearlessly, if it was made between man and man would be held good in any Court."

He trusted that this illegal action which was perpetrated by the Treasury would be undone, and that justice would be meted out to the Irish teachers and that as a first step towards that end, the illegal and unjust rules of 1897 would be withdrawn.

In considering this question it was well to compare the treatment meted out to Irish teachers with the treatment which English and Scotch teachers received. There were 800 teachers on the pension list in England, and this year's Estimates voted them £84,000, or an average of about £100 a year. There were 1,900 teachers on the fund in Ireland, and the British Treasury only voted them £18,000 or an average of less than £10. The English teachers were no better qualified and did no better work than the Irish teachers, and yet they were voted ten times as much by the British Treasury. Did Ireland get her proportionate share she should get from the Imperial Treasury for the pension fund not £18,000 but ten times that amount. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury to look carefully over these figures, and to consider whether something more ought not to be done for the Irish teachers. The Irish teachers were an educated class carrying on the very responsible work of educating the youth of Ireland and training her future workers and citizens, and he thought they had at least equal claim to the Irish Constabulary. For the

Royal Irish Constabulary £377,000 was voted out of the Imperial Treasury for pensions to a force comprising 11,000 men who had practically nothing to do, or in other words, there was voted every year for Royal Irish Constabulary pensions £34 for every man actually in the service. The Irish teacher had to spend forty years in one of the most trying occupations before he reached the maximum pension of £60 per annum, whereas the ordinary constable, whose education was very limited, had only to serve twenty-five years to reach his maximum. In the Metropolitan police there was voted for pensions annually £32,000, though there were only 1,100 men in the force, or £30 per man actually in the service, while for 12,000 Irish teachers there was voted £18,000, or an average of £1 10s. per annum for every man in the service. The British Treasury said they had no more money for the teachers, and told them that they must put their hands into their own pockets. The first reform which the Irish teachers demanded was the right to appoint an actuary. He wished to know whether, after what had been said upon this question, the Treasury still refused this very reasonable demand. Before the Pensions Act was passed a teacher was entitled to gratuities from the British Treasury at the rate of one year's salary for every ten years service, and under those conditions the teacher was better off than when he was called upon to pay £3, £4, and £5 a year to the fund. He knew one case where a highly classed efficient male teacher, after twenty-four years service in Ireland, and who was compelled to retire through ill-health, got a miserable pension of £4 6s. 8d. per annum. An ordinary Irish constable, after twenty-four years service, would get about £60. He knew another instance where a female teacher, after twenty-six years service, with nothing against her, and who retired through ill-health, was offered a pension of £3 17s. 10d. This injustice ought to have been remedied long ago, and if they had had to deal with any other body but the British Treasury they would not have had to wait for twenty-five years for such a disgraceful state of things to be remedied.

This was more than a teacher's question. Anything which improved the character of the men and women who undertook the teaching of the children, made their position more secure, and took away the horrible fear that they might have to spend the end of their days in the workhouse, brought to the service of the State a better body of men and women, and encouraged them to give their time more fully and more effectively to the training of the children. The salaries paid and the pensions granted had a good effect not only upon the teachers, but also upon the children and upon the nation, as it was only by giving good salaries and good pensions that the best men could be attracted to and retained in this most important branch of the public service. He hoped, therefore, that this would be considered not merely as a question affecting 12,000 people, but as a question which vitally affected the future welfare of the nation. With regard to primary education something would have to be done if they desired to prevent a time coming when no good man or woman would stay or enter the teaching profession. The inspectors had stated that they found it almost impossible to get suitable persons to enter the training colleges because the salaries were so low and the pensions offered were so inadequate. Any nation which tolerated such a system for the training of its future citizens as that which existed in Ireland could not possibly get the best results. He trusted that the Secretary to the Treasury would consider that this was a question worthy of his immediate attention. The teachers of Ireland demanded that their pensions should be placed upon a Civil Service basis. That was a reasonable demand, not alone just to the teacher, but essential to securing the best talent and service for the education of the youth of the country. As this was a question on which the House and the country required enlightenment, he would ask the Secretary to the Treasury not alone to give an independent actuary to inquire into the solvency of the present fund, but also to appoint a small Committee of that House to inquire into the equally important matter the inadequacy of the pensions at present given, and the injustice and hardship caused by the time required to get the maximum. He would press very strongly for this Committee and he hoped it would be appointed as soon as possible after Easter. He did not see why the Treasury should refuse to give to Irish teachers what they gave to the English and Scotch teachers, and at least equal terms to those which they gave to the Irish constabulary and the Dublin police. He begged leave to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in consequence of the conflicting Reports of the Government Actuary on the Pension Fund of the National School Teachers of Ireland, the losses incurred in the management of this Fund, the reduction in the Pensions of this important and deserving body of public servants, and the anxiety as to the solvency of the Fund, upon which even their reduced and wholly inadequate superannuations depend, it is the opinion of this House that the Government should at once secure its solvency by making towards the Fund a grant from Imperial sources, as is done in respect of the Teachers of British Primary Schools, subject the Fund to more efficient management, and at the forthcoming quinquennial examination permit the Teachers, who are at once contributors to and sole beneficiaries of the Fund, to be represented by an independent actuary."—(*Mr. Hammond.*)

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said that if a debate in the House was the only thing to convince the Treasury of the justice of the demand, sufficient had taken place to convince every reasonable and sane person, much less the Treasury, of the necessity for conceding the demands contained in the Resolution He could not allow the debate to pass without associating himself entirely with the demands from the Nationalist Members. The Nationalist Party deserved the thanks of the Irish people for bringing the matter before the House, and he hoped before the end of the debate the Secretary to the Treasury would be entirely convinced of the justice of the demand. By the Act of 1879 £1,300,000 was granted from the Irish Church Surplus Fund and that was supplemented by premiums stopped from the teachers' salaries. He understood the present accumulated capital was £2,200,000. What surprised him was that, notwithstanding the necessity for the sale of stock in order to meet the liabilities the increase of the fund had gone on systematically every year. If on retiring after twenty-four years service a man received £4 6s. 8d. and a woman £3 17s. 10d., it was a libel to call it a pension, especially when they compared it with the pension of the English teacher, who through ill-health, after ten years service, got £20 a year and £1 additional for every year after that. They had every reason to complain of the injustice done to Irish national school teachers. It had been pointed out that the £18,000 put upon the Estimates for pensions was Irish money, and he quite agreed with that contention, and that they were under no obligation to this country for that money.

The demand of the Irish teachers was a very simple one, and one that would appeal to any hon. Member, viz., that in the examination that was to take place in regard to the fund next year they should have an independent actuary, and that when the examination of the fund had taken place the wrongs that had been existing in the past should be removed. He himself believed that the sale of stock was not necessary, and there was ground for suspicion that the money had been applied to some other purpose than that for which it was intended. If not, where was it? In 1897 stock was sold at a loss of £13,937, notwithstanding the fact that the income of the year was far in excess of the expenditure. Where was that £13,000? It had not gone to the teachers. Even in 1903 the loss on sale of stock was £67,000, notwithstanding the fact that the income was far above that amount. If they took the national school teachers' salary at £56 a year for a man and £44 for a woman and gave them a pension after twenty-four years of £3 or £4, it was not a tremendous inducement to get a practical man or woman to give primary education to the young in Ireland. There was no Member of the House who would not agree that the mover and seconder of this Resolution had made out a very strong case for the Irish teacher. He was quite sure that the Financial Secretary of the Treasury, who always viewed Irish matters in a sympathetic spirit, would have something to say on the position. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman would not be frightened by the comprehensiveness of the Resolution proposed. The case which had been presented could not be denied, and it could not be got over by oratory from the Treasury Bench, false promises, or saying, "We will look into the matter," or, "It is under consideration." A definite and honest undertaking ought to be given from the Treasury Bench which would remove all doubt with regard to the future action in connection with this particular fund. He associated himself entirely with what had been said by the mover of the Resolution. Whatever political differences there might be between the representatives of Ireland, he trusted that they would be in the unique position to-night of standing united on the question of the Irish national school teachers. There was no divergence of opinion among them with regard to the just and reasonable demand made, and he hoped it would be conceded by the Treasury.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he was closely associated with the Irish teachers, and he was proud to say that a number of them were his personal friends. The superannuation fund was set up by the Act of 1879, which diverted £1,300,000 of the Irish Church surplus for the purposes of the fund, and authorised the taking of premium payments from the teachers. The fund was worked by a schedule, and this was a vital consideration. The schedule set up specifically what the teachers would get in the way of superannuation, what they would get on voluntary retirement before the superannuation stage, and what they would get by way of disablement allowances. It also stated very specifically what they would have to pay. This scheme was worked for twenty years, and when the condition of the fund was examined by a Departmental Committee in 1897 that Committee came to the conclusion that the fund was insolvent at that time. That was a very extraordinary finding to come to, for it was contrary to several other findings. It was alleged that there was a deficiency of £1,200,000. He could not understand the *data* on which the Departmental Committee went in coming to that conclusion, for the fund year by year since the beginning had always had an excess of income over expenditure. In 1897, when it was reported to be insolvent, the fund was revolutionised. Notwithstanding the fact that in 1879 a definite undertaking was given that certain superannuations would be paid, and breakdown pensions would be paid, the fund was revolutionised as the result of the Report of that Committee. New premiums were set up, and new benefits arranged, and a new set of rules was issued during the recess of 1897, and the Irish teachers were compelled to agree to them by a certain date. The people who had entered the fund with the solemn assurance of an Act of Parliament that they would get certain benefits were obliged to accept these new rules. A more monstrous proceeding he had never heard of. It was legal, no doubt, because the Government was entitled to issue the rules, but, morally, nothing could be more indefensible.

What were the conditions which were thrust upon the teachers? The premium payments for superannuation allowances were trebled. They abolished gratuities, ranging from £52 to £282; they raised the retiring age five years; they sensibly reduced the superannuation allowances, and this he considered an acute point. The schedule of the Act provided a maximum pension of £88 for men. That pension was reduced to £60 under the new rules. The retiring allowance for women under the schedule was £63, and that was reduced to £47. He asked the House to contemplate the position of men and women who had their pensions reduced in this way. It was difficult for him to find Parliamentary language to express his view on the question. The breakdown pensions were subjected to the most abominable reductions. It was hoped that with the Treasury grant of £18,000 a year all would be well with the fund as the result of these reductions. The present accumulated capital was £2,191,887. The income both before and after the change always exceeded the expenditure. In 1903, according to the last figures available, it was £46,743. The issue of the rules in 1897 was a gross breach of faith. The teachers had paid their premiums for many years on the assurance of an Act of Parliament that they would get certain benefits, and what had been done constituted a piece of very grave Parliamentary sharp practice. When Parliament met the hon. Member for Louth, on February 18th, 1898, asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if, as it was doubtful whether a debate could be raised after midnight on the new rules affecting Irish teachers' pensions under the Act of 1879, the Government would afford an early opportunity for discussing the matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied—

> "Personally, I should be glad if the matter could be debated soon, though there is no question of urgency involved, as the new rules are already law."

It, therefore, appeared that during the recess the new rules became law. The hon. Member for East Cavan asked the Chief Secretary whether his attention had been called to a printed circular recently sent to the Irish national teachers, requiring them to sign their consent to acceptance of the new rules affecting pensions, and whether the teachers had by this circular been required to sign acceptance, notwithstanding that up to the present no opportunity of considering those rules had been afforded to the House of Commons or to the Irish Members of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Central Division of Leeds, who was then Chief Secretary, replied—

> "The Irish Teachers Pension Rules of 1897 were made under the terms of Section 11 of the Act of 1879, and these rules do not require confirmation by Parliament."

Section 11 was as follows—

> "The schedule to this Act shall be construed and have effect as part of this Act. The rules in the schedule to this Act may from time to time be revoked, varied, and added to by the Lord-Lieutenant with the consent of the Treasury."

But Section 10 had been entirely overlooked, and he could not help thinking that it had been deliberately overlooked. It said—

> "At any time after the passing of this Act, the Treasury, with the consent of the Lord-Lieutenant, may from time to time make rules for the administration of this Act. Copies of all such rules shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within fourteen days from the date thereof, if Parliament is then sitting, and if not, then within fourteen days from the next reassembling of Parliament."

The rules were issued during the recess and the House was virtually told that they passed into law before Parliament met. That might be in accordance with Section 11, but it was a flat contradiction of Section 10. He was very doubtful whether these rules were legal now. The Attorney-General might smile, but he held his opinion all the same.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): They were discussed before the Court of Queen's Bench.

DR. MACNAMARA said that what was discussed was whether the Lord-Lieutenant had the right to alter the terms for any teacher then on the fund. That was legal, but he called it immoral. Under Section 10 the Government was compelled not to bring the rules into law until they had been fourteen days before both Houses of Parliament.

As to superannuation allowances under the new rules, which he still thought were illegal from the point of view of Parliamentary procedure, the Irish teacher, paid proportionally a little more premium than the Scotch, English, or Welsh teacher. The maximum superannuation allowance to the Irish teacher was £60 and the average was about £46. The minimum for the English or Scotch teacher, although proportionally he paid less, was £61. The maximum for the woman teacher under the 1897 scheme was £47, and only a few of these allowances were available; the average was £34. The minimum for an English or Scotch woman teacher was £41 8s. 8d. There was an invalid or breakdown pension which in Ireland for men was £11 15s. and for women £4 9s. 2d. The rules applicable to English and Scotch teachers for the corresponding disablement allowances were as follows,—

> "If the teacher is a man, £20 for ten complete years of recorded service, with the addition of £1 for each complete additional year of recorded service; and if the teacher is a woman £15 for ten complete years of recorded service, with the addition of 13s. 4d. for each complete additional year of recorded service."

The solvency of the fund ought to be guaranteed by the Treasury and a much larger contribution should be made by the Treasury. The money which was devoted to this purpose up to 1898 was taken from the Irish Church surplus. The contribution of the Treasury up till then had been nothing at all. The £18,000 a year was then given to set the fund on its legs. The contributions to the English and Scotch scheme which was set up in 1896 had been in 1900, £40,310; 1901, £52,405; 1902, £55,493; 1903, £62,075; and 1904, £68,775. If the Irish fund had a *pro rata* contribution instead of getting £18,000 it ought now to be getting £180,000.

The Financial Secretary of the Treasury might say that the Irish teachers' conditions of service and wages were much better than those of the English and Scotch teachers. No one who knew the Irish teachers could fail to be impressed with their zeal, devotion, and industry. What were the facts as to their treatment? The average salary of headmasters in Scotland was £176 14s. 3d., in England and Wales £151 9s. 11d. and in Ireland £102. The Irish headmaster received 33 per cent. less than the Scotch and 25 per cent. less than the English and Welsh headmaster. The same proportion was maintained through the different branches of the service. The Irish headmaster got £20 a year less than the English assistant master. The Commissioners would not pay the salary to the teacher direct. He was paid through the manager who might be on his holidays. Not only was the salary meagre but the teacher had sometimes to wait months before getting it. The teachers had to produce every three months testimony of their good character. That might be all very well regarding the men, but it was a little contumelious regarding women. He would suggest to the new Chief Secretary that the rule regarding the three months good character might be struck out altogether. Very often, as the inspectors' reports stated, the Irish teachers had to pay the cost of fuel, and of cleaning and repairing the schools, and they had to buy prizes for the children—things absolutely unknown in England or Scotland. With regard to their houses he found the following in the current Report of the Commissioners:

> "The Commissioners expect that all teachers shall have done at their own expense the following, viz.:—Limewashing; cleaning and repairing glass; cleaning privies and ashpits; gravelling yards and walks, and keeping surface channels in order; sweeping chimneys; making good any damage arising from carelessness or neglect; maintaining fences and gates, except damages from lapse of time; and, in cases of residences built by grants for teachers of national schools vested in the Board of National Education or in trustees, the Commissioners will inflict such penalty as they may deem adequate if the teacher fails to fulfil these conditions."

That was rather a moderate demand, but among the "practical rules" to be strictly observed by the teachers of the national schools was the following:—

> "To avoid fairs, markets, and meetings—but above all political meetings of every kind; to abstain from controversy—"

The instruction to abstain from controversy was the most self-denying ordinance that could be laid upon an Irishman, and if he only observed it he would be entitled to a pension. The Commissioner's Report stated in regard to the qualities they required that—

> "National teachers should be persons of Christian sentiment, of calm temper, and discretion."

That was a very good rule to apply to Chief Secretaries and Attorney-Generals—

> "They should be imbued with a spirit of peace of obedience to the law, and of loyalty to their Sovereign; they should not only possess the art of communicating knowledge, but be capable of moulding the mind of youth, and of giving to the power which education confers a useful direction. These are the qualities for which patrons or local managers of schools, when making choice of teachers, should anxiously look. They are those which the Commissioners are anxious to find, to encourage, and to reward."

When he considered the salaries paid to the teachers and the scandalous treatment they received it was the climax of hypocrisy to put into the rules conditions such as those he had read.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said one of the rules which the hon. Member had read might be adopted in another sphere. He thought that before the quarterly salaries were paid Ministers should present a certificate of character. There was another rule which he was bound to say had a bearing on what had been a burning question lately, namely, the rule which enjoined teachers to avoid controversy. The frank absence of the Chief Secretary was a deliberate confession that the Irish Government was absolutely powerless where Irish finance was concerned, and that the Irish Minister, although he sat in the Cabinet, was subordinate to the Minister who represented the Treasury. Practically, Ireland surrendered its revenues at the time of the Union into the hands of a Treasury clerk. He was far from saying anything disrespectful of the hon. Gentleman the present Financial Secretary of the Treasury, who was of noble lineage and belonged to a family long associated with Ireland. He would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that when he had to represent the Treasury on Irish financial questions he should get a Treasury clerk to speak into a phonograph, put the phonograph on the table, and let it make the statement. In that way the hon. Gentleman would be saved from personal dishonour, and from involving himself in financial misstatements, which, if made by Whitaker Wright or Jabez Balfour, would entail prosecution by his colleagues at his side. If any ordinary man of business or board of directors issued a prospectus which contained statements which were false they were liable to be prosecuted as criminals. He did not take much interest in English frauds, but he read the other day of a remarkable scheme called the Nelson Tea Pensions, whereby a number of old women by paying for 2s. tea 3s. 6d. per pound were to become entitled to pensions for the rest of their natural life when they had bought so many hundred pounds. It was a splendid scheme, and at present the Government were engaged in prosecuting the authors. At all events they had been recommended for prosecution simply because they made an actuarial mistake. The worst thing they did was to issue a prospectus to the public and to sell tea at high prices. But their proceedings were not sanctified by an Act of Parliament. The British Government first seized this public Irish treasure to the extent of £1,300,000, and then said to the 12,000 national teachers of Ireland: "All you good people come to us, come to our schools, and we will teach you law and order and loyalty to the Sovereign; and then we will give you salaries, and if you consent to pay, not to Jabez Balfour, or Whitaker Wright, or to the Nelson Tea Pension Fund, but to the Lion and the Unicorn over which the Union Jack triumphantly waves—if you pay John Bull and Company so much a year, we, the British Government, whose flag floats on every sea, whose Army brings the true religion to Lhasa—we will guarantee you Protestant teachers as well as Catholic teachers"—for it was a fraud on the Orangemen in the North as well as on the idolator in the South—"we will guarantee to you, according to the schedule put into an Act of Parliament passed by a Conservative Government, pensions varying from £70 to £80 a year in proportion to your payments." And when these unfortunate men and women had spent ten, twenty, or thirty years under the most awful slavery, viz., the teaching of youth, on a miserable pittance, this great Government, a Government of hon. Gentlemen with names to which they were expected to attach every sentiment of reverence and respect, turned round on these unhappy men and women who had no redress against them, no law Court in which to drag John Bull and Company, and said: "We did not mean what we have said, and unless you agree before a given date to accept new terms and take £45 a year instead of the £80 a year which we guaranteed we won't give you a shilling." And this was the Government, remember, that expected loyalty and respect for the law in Ireland! They expected the flower of loyalty to grow out of the seed of discontent. That was why he invited the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury not to make himself the mouthpiece of the under clerks of Downing Street, whose one idea of business—he said this after twenty-five years experience in the House—was chicane. The late Lord Salisbury attributed nearly all the evils of England to the Treasury. That was said in the House of Lords, and the words were extant. What protection had they, the minority in the House? He asked if the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had tried to go into this matter himself? Could the hon. Gentleman get up and say that he had given to this question one hour's honest thought, or would he say anything beyond what some puny whipster in the Treasury had written out by a typewriter that he, a man of noble birth, should read it at that box as if it were a fourth Gospel? He held that fraud was written on every line of the action of the Government in regard to the Irish national teachers—indefensible fraud.

What was the very modest demand put forward from those benches? They did not say, "Put us on a level with Englishmen. Oh, no, we are too pigmy for that. We do not even ask to be put on a level with Scotchmen. All we ask is, that a British actuary shall be allowed to investigate the doings of John Bull and Co. in regard to our own money." The Solicitor-General had put on record his opinion that the rules which the Treasury forced down the throats of the Irish teachers were illegal, and not binding. He asked the Government to say by what authority they enforced those rules when their own law officer made that declaration. Would the Secretary to the Treasury venture to rise at that Table and contradict the Solicitor-General? Which of them on those benches were they to believe? They were all honourable men! The Solicitor-General said that the rules were illegal and that the teachers had for years been defrauded of their rights.

He had not seen till that day the Return referred to by his hon. friend the Member for Kerry, but in looking at it what struck him with astonishment was that, in a Return issued by the Treasury for the purpose of giving information to the House, care was actually taken not to put in the totals, so that anyone trying to make out the sense of it would have to add up something like eight columns of figures, so as to arrive at the facts. So far as he could understand, the fund originally stood at £1,300,000, and something like £700,000 had been paid out. But the teachers' contributions had amounted to something like £1,000,000. Therefore the fund was better off to-day by £300,000 than it was when it was established. This was the fund which was declared to be bankrupt by the Treasury! If the fund was bankrupt to-day when it was £300,000 better than when it was started, what were they to think of the late Sir Stafford Northcote and other able men, who, in this House in the year 1879, said the fund was a competent fund to provide for all the pensions? He held that if the Government undertook to manage an insurance business, for that was what this fund was, they had a right to expect from them the same competence that they would get from any of the great insurance companies, like the Norwich Union, the Globe, or the Ocean. If ordinary human beings sitting as a board of directors could do their business competently, why should not the British Government? There was not the poorest friendly society managed by labourers, not to speak of artisans, and not to speak of such friendly societies as the Oddfellows and the Foresters, which would not be disgraced if it had to confess itself guilty of such malfeasance as the Government had had to own in regard to this matter. Such a society would render themselves criminally liable, and why was the Government, because it was a Government, to escape when poor humble people would be convicted and sentenced.

He himself would have put his demand higher than the Resolution went. He maintained that the Government ought to keep faith with these unfortunate teachers, and that every man and woman who had subscribed to the fund was entitled to get what was promised by the Act of 1879. Supposing they carried the Motion, and the Government gave them an actuary, would the actuary present a report of the same kind as in the Humbolt case in Paris? To his thinking they wanted something more than an actuary; they required that the promise of the British Government, on the faith of which the teachers paid their contributions into the fund, should be kept, and the national teachers in Ireland would never cease to agitate until the British Government fulfilled its statutory contract.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) said he should like, in the first place, to say that although the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken, and the hon. Member for Camberwell, had put a little vigour into the debate, he personally had no reason to complain of the line they had taken. Although a good deal of the history of the fund had been recalled there had been no mention of the fact that in 1885 when the first valuation was made, there was a considerable balance of assets.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Was he a Treasury valuer?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: He was. That valuation was followed by what he would call a distribution of profits. Certain advantages were given to the teachers by way of benefits and of reduction of premiums. That latter fact ought to be borne in mind. In 1890 the actuary reported that there was a considerable deficiency, and that report was confirmed in 1895. A Committee was thereupon appointed. They investigated the matter and made several recommendations, three of which were that the deductions from the salaries of teachers for the fund should be increased, that a grant of £18,000 should be made from the British Exchequer, and that part of a lump sum which was voted for the purposes of Irish education should be allocated to the pension fund. At the same time the highest class of pensions was abolished. These proposals were discussed in this House, and they had the approval of the Irish National Board of Education. Rules were framed in 1897 in accordance with these recommendations, and they had remained in force until the present time. He admitted candidly that there had been cases of hardship; but it was only fair to point out that the teachers who were in the service on January 1st, 1898, had the option of remaining under the old rules or of coming under the new rules. [Cries of "No, no" from the IRISH Benches.] He thought he was correct.

DR. MACNAMARA: They were compelled to accept the new rules.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he was told that teachers in the service prior to 1898 had the option. He was unable, on behalf of the Government, to accept the Resolution, but he was ready to suggest a compromise. It was perfectly true that the other day in answer to a Question he stated that he did not think it would be advisable to have an independent valuer; but if it was only as an earnest and a proof that the Treasury was not quite so lax as hon. Gentlemen would have the House to believe, he was prepared to waive his objection on that point, to let bygones be bygones, and to accept an independent valuer appointed on behalf of the teachers at the forthcoming valuation at the end of the year. If that proposal would do anything towards bringing to a conclusion these disputes, which were raised far too often across the floor of the House, he would be only too glad. He would undertake, on behalf of the Treasury, that the report received on this valuation should receive the most careful attention, and if hon. Gentlemen opposite would confine their Resolution to the representation of the teachers by an independent valuer, he should not take any objection to it.

MR. SLOAN asked if the investigation would be at the cost of the Treasury?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he presumed so. He would not make any objection. Of course it was understood that everything would be done to diminish the expense.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he would like to acknowledge the tone in which the hon. Gentleman had spoken, and the concession, such as it was, which he had made. But when the hon. Gentleman asked the Irish Members to withdraw the Resolution and let bygones be bygones, that was a course which he could not advise his friends to take. This Resolution asked for more than an actuary. It asked that—

> "The Government should at once secure its solvency by making towards the fund a grant from Imperial sources, as is done in respect of the teachers of British primary schools, subject the Fund to more efficient management, and at the forthcoming quinquennial examination permit the teachers, who are at once contributors to and sole beneficiaries of the fund, to be represented by an independent actuary."

Therefore, he could not agree to the withdrawal of the Resolution, although he thanked the hon. Gentleman for his concession in regard to the appointment of an actuary.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said that if the hon. Gentleman would assure them that he would put the fund in a condition to carry out the Act of 1879 then they ought all to be satisfied. He took that ground, not by referring to the pensions given to the Royal Irish Constabulary, or to the pensions given to the English and Scotch teachers, but to the pensions provided for by the Act of 1879. It was on the faith of that Act that the teachers were induced to make their contributions. Without the smallest regard to sanctity of contract some gentlemen met together and said these sums should not be paid in future. That was neither reasonable nor fair. The hon. Member for Camberwell referred to the vital part of this matter when he mentioned the provisions of the Act of 1879, the advantages of which to the teachers had been destroyed. It was not denied that the fund was £200,000 richer than when it was created, but it had also to be remembered that the numbers had also increased, and they had a right to expect that when the investigation had taken place and the actuary had reported the Treasury would make good the deficiency to the teachers.

THE SOLICITOR - GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL, Dublin University) said the last speaker who had addressed the House was still under a misapprehension with regard to the actual facts of the case. The hon. Members in introducing and seconding this Motion did so in speeches characterised by great ability and great moderation, and, speaking as they did with actual knowledge and experience of the working of this system, the moderation of their language contrasted favourably with the extreme and exaggerated speech of the hon. Member for Camberwell. What were the actual facts as to what occurred in 1897? The Act of 1879 was passed on the assumption that teachers would contribute about one-fourth of the total amount to provide the pensions under that Act. Unfortunately, in assessing the amount which the teachers were to pay in order to produce that one-fourth these premiums were not assessed on the age of teachers on joining the scheme, the result being that the premiums were assessed at too low a figure. In 1885, when the quinquennial valuation took place, the actuary employed entirely overestimated the position of the fund, and owing to his sanguine overestimate a large distribution of the assets of this fund was made to the teachers who retired during those years to an amount far in excess of that which their premiums or the state of the fund justified. It followed that when the examination was made in 1890 it was found that the fund which in 1885 was thought to be in a very flourishing condition was then really insolvent. That condition of insolvency was found to have increased to a serious extent in 1895. The fund was then threatened with bankruptcy, and it became necessary to consider what could be done to put it in a solvent condition again. A Committee was appointed who recommended that the highest pension that was payable to first-class teachers in the first division should be abolished. The hon. Member for Camberwell made a complete mistake in supposing that these rules of 1897 deprived existing teachers of any right whatever in respect of that pension, because whilst the rules abolished that pension in the case of future teachers of the first division it was expressly provided that any teacher of that class who paid at the old rate was entitled to continue to pay at that rate and to receive the pension on the old scale.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL interposed to remark that only on the previous day he was informed of the case of a teacher in the first class who, when the rule came into force, was not retained on the first-class list.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said he had the rule before him and it stated that any first- class teacher in the first division who had to pay the premiums on the old rate would have his rights secured. Rule 19, to which the hon. Member doubtless referred, expressly safeguarded that right. But in addition to that, and in order to save this fund from insolvency, Parliament agreed to vote in that year, and had voted every year since, a sum of £18,000. That sum was not fixed but might be increased or reduced according to the result of the quinquennial valuation. The next valuation would be made in a few months, and until that had been made they could not say whether the condition of the fund was healthy or insolvent. If unhealthy and it was thought that the £18,000 was insufficient, Parliament was not bound to that sum but could vote any additional sum that might be required to keep it in an efficient state.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said the Resolution before the House only asked that the fund should be put in a solvent condition.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL thought that the Motion was entirely premature because at present, so far as anyone knew, the fund was in a solvent condition. Its actual state would not be ascertained until they knew the result of the quinquennial valuation which would take place in a very few months. The Treasury had gone very far in their endeavours to meet the wishes of hon. Gentlemen opposite, because all sections of the House were united in desiring to meet the wishes of the teachers and in recognising the efficient way in which they did their work. It was the general desire that justice should be done. His right hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had conceded their right to have their interests protected by the appointment of an independent actuary at the next valuation. Why, therefore, should they anticipate that valuation? Why should the House be asked to commit itself to a Resolution calling upon Parliament to put this fund in a solvent condition when it might already be perfectly solvent?

There was another point to which he desired to call attention. The hon. Member for Camberwell forgot to mention that whilst the national teachers in Ireland had been enjoying these pension rights ever since 1879, it was not until 1898 that either English or Scotch teachers were conceded any pension rights whatever. That was a fact which should not be overlooked. He agreed that the scheme under the Act of 1898 was somewhat higher for England and Scotland than for Ireland, but on the other hand Irish teachers had possessed these pensions for nearly twenty years before the same rights were conceded to their brethren in Scotland and England. He would suggest to hon. Members from Ireland that they had accomplished the purpose of the Resolution in obtaining the power to be represented at the next inquiry by an actuary of their own, and that the Motion might be withdrawn.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 113; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 133.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph

Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay(Galway)
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander(Lanark, NE
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, P.J.(Westmeath, N.
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Seely, Maj. JEB.(Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, RtHnC.R.(Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, RtHn.Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon A J (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt.Hn.Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col HF (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J.H.M(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C W(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J.A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dewar, Sir TR(Tower Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir RB (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S(Warwick, S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn JE (Elgin & Nairn)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John(Kent, Faversham
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn.Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn.HL.W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant(Yorks.NR
Lee, Arthur H(Hants, Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long, Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Reginald J(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir HE(Wigt'n)
Maxwell, WJH (Dumfriesshire)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott(Hants.
Morgan, David J)Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Muntz, Sir Philip A
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl

Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith, Rt Hn J Parker(Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J M'Taggart
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir CEH(Sheffield)
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col ACE. (Taunton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

UNEMPLOYED RELIEF (WORK) (LONDON).

Return ordered, "showing, in respect of the Common Council of the City of London, and each of the Metropolitan Borough Councils, the amount expended in wages for work undertaken specially for the purpose of providing work for unemployed workmen during the six months ending on the 31st day of March 1905, distinguishing the proportion of such expenditure which was met out of (a) local rates, (b) voluntary subscriptions received by the council, and (c) contributions by the Central Unemployed Committee, and specifying the nature of the work undertaken, the number of men employed thereon in each month, the rate of pay given, the period for which the work, or each kind of work, if more than one kind was undertaken, lasted, and the average number of days work allowed each man; also, showing the estimated amount which would have been paid in wages if the work had been carried out under ordinary conditions."—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

EDUCATION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That there be laid before this House a Return relating to Education for England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1905, in the following form:—

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1. Elementary Education, total State grant for day schools for year ended March, 1905			
2. Cost of administration and inspection			
3. Pupils on roll			
4. Average daily attendance			
5. Cost per pupil in average daily attendance			
6. Number of schools			
7. Number of certificated teachers			
8. Average salary of teachers			
9. Total rates and voluntary contributions			
10. Total State grant for Secondary Education			
11. Number of pupils in average attendance			
12. Cost per pupil to State			
13. Total State grants for Universities and Colleges			
14. Total number of pupils			
15. Average cost per student to State			
16. Total grants for all purposes from State			
17. Average per head of population			

—(*Mr. Thomas O'Donnell.*)

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University) was understood to say that he had explained to the hon. Member why the Return could not be granted in the form asked for. The Scottish and Irish Offices had informed him that they could not supply the information desired. With regard to University education, that was a matter for the Treasury, and it would be extremely difficult to supply the particulars asked for in connection with secondary education. Certain portions of the Return could be given, and he suggested that the hon. Member should consult him as to the form in which it could be granted.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) pointed out that practically all the information he asked for could be obtained from the Estimates, and the Departments concerned might very well compile the table showing the comparative amounts granted to the different parts of the Kingdom. The only reason he could give for the refusal to grant the Return was that the Government were afraid that it would prove that Ireland was very unfairly treated in the matter. Ireland received not a penny from Imperial funds for University or secondary education, while hundreds of thousands of pounds per annum were given to England and Scotland.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton) said that so far as Scotland was concerned several of the particulars asked for could not be given, and the result, for the purposes for which the hon. Member desired the Return, would be altogether misleading. The Scottish Office were quite prepared to give the information so far as they had it, but the Return, if granted in the form asked for, would have to be based upon estimates and figures which would bring out an inaccurate result.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL asked which part of the Return it was that could not be given.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said that, inasmuch as the Government Departments were able to get from foreign countries Returns relating to such questions as armaments and so forth, there could not be much difficulty in the Board of Education getting from the Treasury the information required for this Return. He was unable to accept the statement that it could not be given. There was evidently some desire for concealment, and the refusal was only another proof of the changed attitude of various Departments towards the reasonable demands of Irish Members.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) pointed out that in the last Motion they asked for money for education, and it was refused; they now asked for information about education, and that also was refused. All the items of this proposed Return were important from the point of view of showing the discrimination against Ireland, but the House of Commons by its majority, and through the mouthpiece of the Education Department itself, refused to enable the comparison to be made. The House had given a magnificent exhibition of their incompetence to manage Irish affairs, and he congratulated them upon it.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) submitted that all the figures asked for were in existence. The particulars required for the first twelve items were in the educational Blue-books for England and Scotland and the Report of the Commissioners for Ireland; those necessary for the next four or five were in the Blue-book issued annually in connection with grants made to University Colleges, and by the aid of those documents combined with the Census Returns all the particulars asked for could be given.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that this question of the granting of Returns was supposed to have been amicably settled, but now the whole question was to be reopened because of the refusal of Ministers to grant information most reasonably asked for. Members could not be expected to make these calculations for themselves, and he submitted that the refusal was one of the most outrageous ever made.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 112; Noes, 124. (Division List No. 134.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John.
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellis John Edward (Notts.)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay,Alexander (LanarkNE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hutchinson, Dr.Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy,P.J.(Westmeath, N.)
Kennedy,Vincent P.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Law,HughAlex. (Dongal,W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Mitchell,Edw (Fermanagh, N.)
Montagu,Hon.J Scott(Hants.)
Mooney, John J.
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary,N.)
O'Connor,James(Wicklow W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(RoscommonN.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Seely,Maj.J.E.B (Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheey, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Sullivan, Donal
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn.A.J. (Manch'r)

Balfour,RtHnGeraldW (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles,Lt.-Col.HF (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H M (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon.Sir Ed. W. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cecil, Evelyn (Ashton Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,RtHn,J.A(Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Dyke,Rt.Hn Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Hon. AilwynEdward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,SirR.B (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster,PhilipS.(WarwickS. W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson,Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon,Hn.JE (Elgin & Nairn)
Gretton, John
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A (Stafford,W.)
Hope,J.F (Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard,John(Kent,Faversham
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon Col.W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson,Hn.H.L. W. (MileEnd)
Lawson,JohnGrant(YorksN.R)
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Long,Col. CharlesW.(Evesham)
Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,W.J.H(Dumfriesshire)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morgan,DavidJ.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys,Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith,Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith,H.C.(North'mbTyneside
Spear, John Ward
Stanley,Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent,ColSirC.H.E(Sheffield)
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby,Lt.-Col.A.C E(Taunton)
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES,—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

As amended, considered; Bill read the third time, and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury whether he could explain the Chief Secretary's absence from the House during the discussion of Irish affairs; whether the right hon. Gentleman would also be absent to-morrow night and on Thursday when Irish questions would also be under discussion; and whether the cause of the right hon. Gentleman's absence was his presence at Punchestown Races.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) asked whether the Prime Minister proposed to be present to-morrow night when the House would really be discussing an academic question which was not before the present Parliament.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that important statements had been made in another place with reference to the calling of a Colonial Conference; that, contrary to the practice in the House of Commons, the statements were peculiarly definite; and that, also contrary to the practice in the House of Commons, when the question was raised Ministers did not run away. One of the important features of the statement of the noble Duke who spoke for the Government was that the Prime Minister was definitely opposed to the protective taxation of food. That was a most important statement which ought to have been made by the Prime Minister himself. But a statement in so few words was quite beyond the Prime Minister's mental capacity. He took refuge in circumlocution, evasion, and verbiage, for the purpose not of enlightening but of bamboozling the House of Commons. The only reason that could be adduced why that statement should not have been made in the House of Commons was that it would have been distasteful to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. If the right hon. Gentleman was able to confirm that statement of the noble Duke, the House would have it on authority that the views of the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman for West Birmingham were not coincident but divergent. If any declaration so satisfactory had been made at an earlier stage of the controversy it would not have been necessary for the Government to take refuge in flight.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said the House of Commons was afflicted by having not only a run-away Prime Minister, but also a racing Chief Secretary. The Ministers of the Crown divided among themselves out of public funds £92,500 a year, nearly one-half of which went to the Prime Minister and his relations. As to the Chief Secretary, his duty was to attend to his business in the House of Commons, not to make a book at Punchestown. It was necessary to show the material interests of these sons of Empire. The Chief Secretary had been pitchforked into a position with £4,500 per annum, with house and coals for nothing, and housemaids and gaslight thrown in. He was also allowed expenses, in which no doubt his fare to Punchestown would be included. Why was he not in the House to discharge the duty for which he was paid? Any trustee who so neglected his obligations would be relieved of his duty on the ground of fraud—in the legal, not the moral sense. According to an evening paper, on the very day when Irish University education was to be discussed in this House the Chief Secretary was to be the guest of Lord Iveagh, so that he could attend Punchestown Races more conveniently. He submitted that that was an outrage on Parliament. After that the right hon. Gentleman was to be the guest of Lord Londonderry, and Irish business in Parliament was apparently to be left to take care of itself.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) said he had been very much occupied in looking after the business of the House, and had not, therefore, had the advantage of listening to what had been said in another place. In regard to the presence or absence of the Prime Minister the following evening, the hon. Member for Anglesey would have ocular demonstration if he was himself in his place. As to the Questions of the hon. Members for Dublin and South Donegal, he could assure them that the Chief Secretary had gone over to Ireland on purely Irish business.

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 12*th April,* 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Tralee Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Caledonian Railway Bill (by order). Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Cathcart; and Maryhill; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Carluke; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Law; and Stranraer; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Kensington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Chester; Dorchester; Edinburgh (three); Leigh on Sea; Tamworth; and Westcliff and Southend; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) PENSION FUND.

Account [presented April 11th] to be printed. [No. 123.]

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).

Copy presented, of Fifteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AUSTRALIA.

Copy presented, of Despatch from the Governor-General of Australia on the subject of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, and the Reply thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Copy presented, of Twenty-third Report of the Royal University of Ireland, being for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered February 15th; *Lord Stanley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.]

TRAINING COLLEGES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing the total cost to the State of the following Training Colleges, for the five years ended the 31st day of December, 1904:—

	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
Kildare Place, Dublin … … … ..					
Drumcondra, Dublin … … … …					
Baggot Street, Dublin … … … …					
Waterford Training College … … …					
Belfast Female Training College … … …					
Limerick Female Training College … …					

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) COMMISSIONERS (MEETINGS, ETC.).

Return ordered, "of the number of Meetings held by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland in each of the five years ending the 31st day of December, 1904; and the name and number of attendances of each Commissioner in each of these five years."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

TAXES AND IMPOSTS.

Return ordered, "showing (1) the Rates of Duties, Taxes, or Imposts collected by Imperial Officers; (2) the Quantities or Amounts taxed; (3) the Gross Receipts derived from each Duty; and (4) the Net Receipts and Appropriations thereof in the year ending the 31st day of March, 1905; and (1) the aggregate Gross Receipts derived from all such Duties, Taxes, or Imposts, under the principal heads of Revenue; (2) the aggregate Net Receipts; (3) the Charges of Collection; and (4) the Produce, after deducting these Charges, on each of the ten years ending the 31st day of March, 1905."

"And, Notes to show any changes in the Taxes, Duties, and Imposts consequent upon the acceptance of the Budget Proposals of 1905 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No 317, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Goddard.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Repairs to Cable of Barrels Lightship.

Major JAMESON (Clare, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade when the cable of the Barrels Lightship was last lifted, and by whom it was examined, and if any repairs were done at that time; and, if so, what was the cost of the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the cable of this lightship was last lifted in August, 1904, when it was examined by the chief officer of their steamship "Tearaght" and the master of the lightship. As a result repairs were effected by cutting out all the worn cable to the extent of forty fathoms, and replacing it by the same amount of new cable at a cost of about £70.

Supply of Drink to Drunken Persons in Ireland—Warning by Police to Publicans.

Mr. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin Harbour): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the order issued in December, 1902, to the members of the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force and the Royal Irish Constabulary making it part of their duty, when they observe a person under the influence of drink entering licensed premises, to warn the licensee or his assistants is still in force; and, if so, whether it is acted upon in Dublin; and whether, in the interests of sobriety as well as the protection of the licensed trade, he will cause the attention of the members of both forces to be again specially drawn to the terms of the order.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Answer to the first two inquiries is in the affirmative. The order has been issued in printed form to both forces, and is fully known to the police. There does not appear to be any sufficient reason why special attention should be again directed to it.

Licensed Premises in Ireland Voluntarily Closed on St. Patrick's Day.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of licensed premises which were voluntarily closed on St. Patrick's Day in the cities of Dublin, Limerick, Cork, Galway, Waterford, and Belfast; and whether he is aware that there is throughout Ireland a general desire to confirm this voluntary closing by Act of Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) In Dublin 585: in Limerick 287; in Cork 18; in Galway 139; in Waterford 162; and in Belfast none. I have no information upon the point raised in the latter inquiry.

Line Fish landed in the Island of Lewis by Lewis Boats

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state the quantity of line-caught fish landed in the Island of Lewis by Lewis fishing boats for each year since 1870, inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) Fresh fish statistics for the Island were only collected after 1884. Previous to 1889 only the grand totals for the district, which embraced at that period North and

South Uist and the Island of Barra, are entered in the fresh fish statistics book. The appended figures are therefore the fullest that can be given.

Statement showing the quantity of Line Fish landed in the Island of Lewis by Lewis Boats from 1889 to 1904.

Year.	Catch of White Fish.	
	Cwts.	
1884 - - - -	57,561	The figures from 1884 to 1888 are for the district which embraced during that period North and South Uist and also the Island of Barra.
1885 - - - -	121,154	
1886 - - - -	46,635	
1887 - - - -	35,341	
1888 - - - -	43,635	
1889 - - - -	86,753	Approximate quantity of line fish landed by Lewis boats from 1889 to 1904.
1890 - - - -	97,193	
1891 - - - -	108,164	
1892 - - - -	119,823	
1893 - - - -	114,612	
1894 - - - -	84,137	
1895 - - - -	96,267	
1896 - - - -	109,871	
1897 - - - -	116,765	
1898 - - - -	93,358	
1899 - - - -	93,113	
1900 - - - -	76,316	
1901 - - - -	63,895	
1902 - - - -	42,669	
1903 - - - -	36,069	
1904 - - - -	64,192	

Annual Leave of Belfast Telegraph Staff.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General can he state if the strength of the telegraph staff (male) at Belfast at the present time is under or above the strength of the staff at the time the present annual leave scheme was adopted; and can he say under what circumstances the numbers taking leave at the various periods of the year have been reduced this year from eight to seven notwithstanding that at the time when the scheme was adopted a definite agreement was entered into with the staff that the number should be fixed at eight.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The strength of the male telegraph staff at Belfast at the present time is practically the same as it was when the present leave scheme was introduced. Seven officers were then allowed on leave at the same time, and when the staff was increased in 1901 that number was raised to eight. The staff was recently reduced, and consequently the number allowed away on leave this year will be reduced to seven for the first part of the leave season, though for the rest of the time eight will be allowed away. So far as I can ascertain no such agreement as that to which the hon. Member refers was made with the staff, and I cannot see how such an arrangement would be practicable, inasmuch as the number to be allowed on leave must depend on the total staff employed.

Suggested Issue of Books of Penny and Halfpenny Postage Stamps.

Mr. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will take into his favourable consideration the suggestion that the practice of issuing small books containing twenty-four penny postage stamps, at the price of 2s. 0½d., should be extended, and books containing eighteen penny and twelve halfpenny stamps should be issued at the same price.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) In view of the comparatively small sale of books of stamps I hardly think it is expedient to have two different books. A book containing both penny and halfpenny stamps would perhaps be more useful than the book of penny stamps now on sale, and I am considering the question of substituting books containing both penny and halfpenny stamps when the stock in hand of the present book is exhausted. This stock is, however, sufficient at the present rate of sale to last for some considerable time.

Assistant Postmen's Duties at Cardiff.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in Cardiff many assistant postmen's duties extend for more than six hours daily; and whether he will take steps to have these times made into full time established duties, especially in view of the periods some of the assistant postmen have been waiting for appointment.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The question of increasing the number of full duty established postmen at Cardiff is being considered in connection with a general revision of the postmen's duties which is in hand.

Aliens in British Prisons—Classification of Offences.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will furnish a classified list showing the nature of the crimes for which the bulk of the 4,833 aliens in His Majesty's prisons are at present undergoing sentences.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The figure quoted by the hon. Member is not the number of aliens at present undergoing sentence, but the total number received under sentence in all the prisons in Great Britain and Ireland during the year 1904. The number at present in prison is very much less, only seven or eight hundred. The Royal Commission on Alien Immigration gave in their Report (Vol. III., p. 81) a classification of the offences committed by aliens received under sentence during the years 1889 to 1903. I think that these figures should sufficiently meet the purpose which the hon. Member has in view. The total for 1904 is higher, but there is no reason to think that the proportion of the different classes of offences has altered materially. To compile a similar classification for the year 1904 would involve a laborious examination of the prison records, which I should be reluctant to impose on the hard-worked staff of the prisons.

Accidents in the Metropolis due to Horse Traction.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state how many accidents to the person and to property respectively have occurred within the Metropolitan District of London from June, 1904, to March, 1905, due to horse traction; and further to state result of various accidents.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The subjoined table gives the information which the hon. Member desires:—

Cause of accident. (I.)	Total number of accidents to persons or property. (II.)	Number of accidents to property. (III.)	Number of accidents to persons. (IV.)	Total number of persons injured in accidents shown in Column IV. V	Nature of accidents to persons.		
					Number slight. (VI.)	Number serious. (VII.)	Number fatal. (VIII.)
Horses - -	277	78	193	206	177	27	2
Horse-drawn vehicles -	15,736	11,711	4,916	5,126	4,473	543	110
	16,013	11,789	5,109	5,332	4,650	570	112

Lighthouse Lenses.

Major JAMESON: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state if a contract, binding the Trinity House and Irish Lighthouse Commissioners to purchase all their lenses from Messrs. Chance of Birmingham, still exists; whether he is aware that the Commissioners of Northern Lights have with advantage purchased by obtaining competitive tenders from other firms; and whether, with reference to the statement of the engineer of the Trinity House to the Mercantile Marine Committee that a certain French lighthouse seemed to be of a better class than that adopted by the Trinity House, he will obtain the cost of building the French lighthouses of La Heve, Griznez, and Ushant.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) A contract has been entered into between the firm mentioned and each of the three general lighthouse authorities, under which the latter, for a period of three years from January 1st, 1904, undertake to purchase their optical apparatus from Messrs. Chance in accordance with a schedule of prices which has been arranged. It is, however, one of the conditions of this contract that the lighthouse authorities reserve the power of putting up to open competition any apparatus for which Messrs. Chance may have submitted a price which is considered too high, and I understand that both the Trinity House and the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses have in certain cases exercised that power. The Board of Trade will endeavour to obtain information from the French Government regarding the cost of construction of the three lighthouses named in the latter part of the Question.

Cost of St. Catherine's, Dungeness, the Wolf, and Fastnet Lighthouses.

Major JAMESON: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he will state the cost of the lighthouses at St. Catherine's, Dungeness, the Wolf, and the Fastnet complete.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) I have received the following information from the Trinity House:—

St. Catherine's:—	£
The original building showing an oil light was purchased in 1840 for - -	7,855
The cost of installing the electric light in 1888 amounted to - - -	12,767
Total - -	£20,622

Dungeness:—	£
The cost of the two new lighthouses and fog signal recently completed is -	21,138
To which should be added the value of old buildings worked in - - -	3,000
Total - -	£24,138

Wolf:—	
The cost of this lighthouse was - - - -	£63,426

I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the account for the Fastnet is not yet closed, but that the approximate cost is estimated at £83,500.

Wick Harbour Improvements—Application for a Loan.

Mr. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that an application has been made by or on behalf of the Trustees of the Wick Harbour for a loan, or a free grant, for the purpose of extending or improving the harbour accommodation at Wick to meet the growing requirements of the fishing fleets on the north-east coast of Scotland, he will say whether it is intended to make a free grant or to sanction a loan for the proposed work, and the conditions upon which same is to be given; and will he explain why a similar application made on two previous occasions has been refused; and whether the circumstances of the applicants have altered since the previous refusals.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I understand that an application for a loan has been preferred by the Wick Harbour Trustees to the Public Works Loan Board, who have it now under their consideration. A previous application was not entertained, as, on the occasion of the remission of an outstanding balance on an old loan in 1902, a condition was attached that no applications for further loans of public money should be made. As new facts have been brought forward by the hon. Member for Wick, this condition has now been waived.

Germany and England—Interpretation of "Most-Favoured-Nation Clause."

MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Germany and England interpret the most-favoured-nation clause in the same way; and, if not, what is the difference.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) I am not aware of any case in which the German Government has asserted a different view of the meaning of the most-favoured-nation clause from that held by ourselves.

Bradford Smallpox Outbreak.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the outbreak of smallpox at Bradford; and whether he would call the attention of the guardians to the importance of the earliest discovery of cases of the disease, and with this view suggest to the guardians the issue of notices to the public urging them to seek medical advice at the earliest opportunity in all feverish ailments accompanied by a rash, however slight.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am aware that there have been cases of smallpox at Bradford during the present year. The suggestions referred to in the Question appear to me rather to concern the town council than the guardians. I have no reason to doubt that the town council and their officers are taking all precautions which experience has shown to be necessary in dealing with the matter; but I will draw the attention of the town council to the suggestion of the hon. Member. I may add that nineteen additional cases were notified during the week ended on the 8th instant; and I am in communication with the town council as to the circumstances which led to their occurrence.

Medical Out-relief at Bradford.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether during the last few years the Bradford Guardians have reduced the number of applications for out-relief, and whether they have discouraged applications for medical out-relief by requiring parents (in the case of sick children) to attend before the board or a committee, or by making the relief on loan in the first instance, or by other means; and, if so, whether he would send a communication to the guardians recommending them to encourage applications for medical out-relief (by those unable to pay for medical advice) in the early stages of illness, and before infectious diseases have developed.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am aware that some few years since the Bradford Guardians adopted a policy of administration of out-relief, the effect of which has been to diminish the number of applications, but I have no information to show that the action of the guardians has been such as to render it necessary or desirable to send to them a communication of the kind referred to in the latter part of the Question.

Indian Government Appointments of Value of Rs. 5,000 Per Annum and Upwards created since 1892.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state how many new Indian Government appointments of Rs. 5,000 per annum and upwards have been created since 1892; and how many of these appointments are now held by Europeans and how many by Indians.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I observe that the same information was asked for by the hon. Mr. Gokhale at a meeting of the Council of the Governor-General of India on the 10th March, and that the Financial Member of the Council replied as follows:—"The preparation of the Return asked for by the hon. Member would require a reference to Account Offices, Civil, Public Works, and Military, all over India. It would involve a very large amount of labour, and occupy several months of time. In these circumstances the Governor-General in Council does not feel justified in ordering the Return to be prepared." I therefore hesitate to make so considerable a call on the Government of India.

French Import Duties on Indian, Chinese, and Japanese Silk Goods.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the duties on Indian silk goods entering France are higher than the duties on similar goods from China or Japan; and whether any negotiations have taken place on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Silk goods of Chinese or Japanese origin, so far as they are not on the free list, are admitted into France at lower rates than are applicable to similar goods of Indian origin. The Answer to the second Question is in the negative.

Changes in Hong-Kong Garrison.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for War what changes have recently been made or are about to be made in the garrison of Hong-Kong.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) A battalion of Native Indian Infantry has recently been withdrawn. The establishment of the one British battalion is being slightly reduced.

Volunteer Long-Service Medal—Case of Mr. J. Gibbs.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the fact that Mr. J. Gibbs, of Cable Street, St. George's East, joined the 2nd Tower Hamlets Rifle Volunteers in 1881, and after upwards of twenty years service was transferred to the 1st City Imperial Yeomanry, in which force he still serves, can he see his way to grant Mr. Gibbs the long-service medal in recognition of this long period of service in the Auxiliary Forces.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) As regards the Imperial Yeomanry long-service medal Mr. Gibbs' service in this branch has not been sufficient to qualify him for the medal. As regards the Volunteer long-service medal there is no record at the War Office of any recommendation having been made by the proper authorities.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Singapore—Officers' Barrack Accommodation.

Mr. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the accommodation provided for the officers of the Native Infantry Regiment now in garrison at Singapore consists of huts partially made of palm leaves; and, if so, whether better accommodation can be provided for British officers and their families in a tropical climate with a rainfall of 200 inches per annum.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question for my right hon. friend. The temporary barracks mentioned are made of brick piers and attap roofs and sides (attap being the leaf of a large flag used locally for thatching). They were designed to last three years and have been in use more than half that time. The married officers' quarters have been reported to be unsatisfactory, and arrangements to provide permanent accommodation are now in progress.

Judge Advocate-General.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War by whom at the present time is the office of Judge Advocate-General, to whose holder appertains the duty of revising the decisions of Courts-martial, whose number average annually 17,000, filled; whether it is still the duty of the Judge Advocate-General in all serious cases to present the proceedings of Courts-martial to the Sovereign in person and to advise on the sentence; and, if that duty has been abrogated or modified, when and under what circumstances did the abrogation or modification take place, and what were the reasons for the change.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Pending the vacancy in the office of the Judge Advocate-General the business is carried on by the Deputy Judge Advocate-General. It is not the duty of the Judge Advocate-General to present the proceedings of any Court-martial to the Sovereign in person, but it is his duty in such cases as require confirmation by the King to tender to the King in person his opinion as to the legality of the proceedings, in which the legality of the sentence is included. This duty has not been in any way abrogated or modified. The question whether any modification should be made in the position and functions of the Judge Advocate-General is under consideration.

Militia and the Short-Service Army.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what will be the position of those officers and men of the Militia who do not desire to be incorporated in the short-service Army, in the event of the battalion being so incorporated.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The position of any officers and men who may not desire to be so incorporated will be unaltered, so far as their appointments or engagements are concerned; but I am not able at present to enter into any details in this matter.

New Conditions of Army Service.

Mr. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what are the conditions of colour service, Reserve service, and pay he proposes for the foreign-service and home-service Armies; and whether recruiting sergeants will have instructions to offer the recruit a choice of home or foreign service.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The information required will be found in the Papers presented to the House last session—Cd. 1907 and Cd. 1910. Recruiting sergeants will, as usual, offer the recruit a choice of those services for which recruiting may for the time being be open.

The Militia and the Home-Service Army.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War by what method it is proposed to decide the question as to whether a Militia battalion shall or shall not be transformed into a home-service battalion of the Regular Army; whether a bare majority of officers or men or both will be considered adequate; and, if not, what proportion will be considered necessary.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The question brought forward by the hon. Member does not at present arise, and I think it would be premature to anticipate the instructions which the Army Council may think fit to give upon the subject.

Major SEELY: Are we to understand that it is proposed to go forward with the transformation of the Militia this year?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir.

White Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

Mr. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state how many of the white men at present employed in or about the Transvaal mines are of British origin and nationality; and how many belong to other white nationalities.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington): On March 31st, 1904, as the hon. Member will see by reference to page 4 of Cd. 2104, the number of British born employed in the mining industry was 11,408, the number of other Europeans, 1,766. I have asked for a similar Return for March 31st, 1905, but have not yet received it.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does the total include Beit and Eckstein?

[No Answer was returned.]

Terms of Native Labour Engagements in the Transvaal Mines.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the circular of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, dated March 17th, in which it is stated that in future no natives will be recruited in Basutoland and Orange River Colony, except for underground work only and for a period of not less than twelve months; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have not seen the circular referred to.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiries.

MR. LYTTELTON: My mind is open to conviction. If the hon. Gentleman will give me a reason for making inquiries I will do so.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked whether it was right that the terms of engagement between Kaffirs and the mineowners should be suddenly altered so that the natives should not be employed except for a whole year.

MR. LYTTELTON: As to the duration of the engagement I will make inquiries.

Riot at Jumpers Deep Mine.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what was the cause of the riot on April 9th at the Jumpers Deep Mine in the Transvaal; how many Chinese coolies were concerned in it; how many were arrested; and, if their trial has already taken place, what sentences were inflicted.

MR LYTTELTON: I have telegraphed for information but have not yet received the reply.

The Mullah.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Treaty of Agreement which the Mullah has signed was drawn up jointly by Italy and Great Britain; and what are the terms of the agreement.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): I have nothing to add to the statement which I made in reply to the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets on March 23rd†. We have not yet received any reply from Colonel Swayne.

Coroners' Juries—Viewing of Dead Bodies.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the fact that at Bradford a coroner and jury are under observation because they were compelled to view the body of a man who, in the opinion of the medical officer, had been suffering from malignant smallpox; whether, in view of the practice of viewing bodies in such cases becoming a possible danger to the community, he will consider the advisability of again introducing the Bill which in 1879 passed its Second Reading under the care of the then Home Secretary, the object of which was to make the viewing of bodies by coroners and juries no longer compulsory.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): My attention has not been called to the case mentioned by the hon. Member. With regard to the general question of the obligation of coroners and coroners' juries to view bodies, I fear that I cannot add anything to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil on March 23rd‡.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the opinion of the majority of coroners is against the practice of viewing bodies?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have no doubt it is in a great many cases, but I am not inclined as at present advised to introduce a Bill on the subject.

Agricultural Rates Act (1896) Continuance Bill.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Board of

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 952.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 931.

Agriculture whether he will insert in the Agricultural Rates Act (1896) Continuance Bill a clause providing that in those cases in which it can be proved that the benefits proposed to be conferred by the Bill accrue to the landlord and not to the tenant, the tenant shall have the right to recover the same from the landlord.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): A clause of the kind suggested would, I think, clearly be outside the scope of the Bill, which only extends for a further period the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Act, 1901.

Postage on Parochial Assessment Notices.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that notices intimating the amount of parochial assessment due, which have hitherto been delivered for a halfpenny, are not now eligible to be included under that class of packet that can be sent for a halfpenny; and whether, in view of the addition to the outlays of the rating authorities and incidentally of the ratepayers that this will entail, he will consider the advisability of revoking this order as far as it applies to the above notices.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): It is true that, before January 1st, 1904, notices issued by local authorities were transmissible for a postage of one halfpenny. When, however, the regulations of the halfpenny post were revised it was found necessary to restrict the privilege of sending notices (other than those which conformed to the conditions applicable to circulars) at the halfpenny rate to officers of a Court of Justice. I am sorry that I do not see my way to alter the decision then arrived at.

Removal of Shingle from the Lancashire Coast.

MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the result of the inquiry held by Captain Frederick, R.N., into the removal of shingle from the sea shore lying between Blackpool and Fleetwood has been reported to the Board; and, if so, what action it is proposed to take upon it.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): Yes, Sir, Captain Frederick's report has been received and considered, and the applicants have been informed that the Board of Trade are prepared to make an Order under Section 14 of the Harbours Act, 1814, prohibiting the removal of shingle or ballast from the shores or banks of the sea between Blackpool and Fleetwood.

Wick Harbour.

SIR ARTHUR BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is in a position to state what is the decision of the Treasury upon the application made to the Lords Commissioners for assistance to the authorities of the harbour of Wick in completing the harbour works designed to render Wick a safe harbour of refuge.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I understand that the Trustees, on the representation of my hon. friend, have applied to the Public Works Loan Board for a further loan, and that the application is now under the consideration of the Board. It is an entirely independent body, but as I know the very great interest my hon. friend takes in the matter, the decision of the Board shall be communicated to him as soon as possible.

Report of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain why the Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the year 1903 is only just now issued; and if, having regard to the continued delay which takes place in connection with the publication of this Report as well as the Reports of Irish Boards and the consequent depreciation in their value for different purposes, he will take steps to ensure reasonable punctuality in future.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The delay in this particular case was unavoidable. There is no reason to apprehend that similar delay will occur in future. My right hon. friend has already promised to have these Reports expedited as much as possible.

Irish Police and Drunken Persons.

Mr. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin Harbour): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the order issued in December, 1902 to the members of the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force and the Royal Irish Constabulary making it part of their duty, when they observe a person under the influence of drink entering licensed premises, to warn the licensee or his assistants is still in force; and, if so, whether it is acted upon in Dublin; and whether, in the interests of sobriety as well as the protection of the licensed trade, he will cause the attention of the members of both forces to be again specially drawn to the terms of the order.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Answer to the first two inquiries is in the affirmative. The order has been issued in printed form to both forces, and is fully known to the police. There does not appear to be any sufficient reason why special attention should be again directed to it.

Kerry Railway Guarantees.

Mr. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he proposes to take any steps to relieve the ratepayers in the county of Kerry from the payment of certain railway and other guarantees in accordance with the promise of the right hon. Member for Dover.

Mr. ATKINSON: I beg to ask the hon. Member to postpone this Question until Monday, when my right hon. friend, who is now absent on official business, will be in his place.

Mrs. Adair's Mountmellick Estate.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether negotiations are in progress for the purchase by the Estates Commissioners of Mrs. Adair's estate situate at Mountmellick, Queen's County; and whether he can say, as this estate includes the holdings of several evicted tenants, that due regard shall be had to their claims in the disposal of the property.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Answer to the first inquiry is in the negative. If the estate should come before the Commissioners the claims of the evicted tenants will be considered.

Reenard and Valentia Ferry.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what progress has been made with the negotiations for improving the ferry communications between Reenard and Valentia under the Marine Works Act.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Congested Districts Board have offered to contribute £1,000 towards the cost—estimated at £1,800—of erecting a pier at Reenard Point, but no contribution from other sources has been promised. The Great Southern and Western Railway Company, it is understood, are not prepared to co-operate with the Board. The Knight of Kerry stated last year that he was prepared to provide a ferry-boat if the pier were built.

Mr. BOLAND: Are the negotiations still going on?

Mr. ATKINSON: I do not think they are absolutely finished.

Mr. BOLAND: Are no funds to be provided by the Board for carrying out marine works?

Mr. ATKINSON: I must ask for notice of that.

Civil Service Superannuation.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he intends carrying into effect the recommendations of the Royal Commission which sat in reference to the present Civil Service Superannuation Act; and, if so, when.

Mr. ATKINSON: This Question is not one which my right hon. friend can answer. It is not for him to carry into effect the recommendations referred to.

Irish Government Officials—Qualifications Return.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Return ordered as to the qualifications of Government servants in Ireland, whether he can state on what grounds his legal advisers base their opinion that the House of Commons has no power to require Government servants in Ireland to answer interrogatories ordered by this House; whether the Government will sanction any official refusing to supply the information called for by this House; and whether it will be made clear that officials pursuing that course will do so at their own risk.

Mr. ATKINSON: The grounds are that there is nothing in the terms or conditions of the employment of Civil servants, or of the well-established practice of the Civil Service, entitling the Executive to institute *ex post facto* inquiries into such incidents of their past private life as the place of their education, or obliging Civil servants to answer such inquiries, if instituted. The reply to the second query is in the affirmative, and to the third in the negative.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Do the Government intend to sanction the action of any official who chooses to defy the order of this House?

Mr. ATKINSON: An order of this House cannot compel any man, not a Member, to answer a question which by law he is not bound to.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Who gave this advice to the Chief Secretary? Was it the right hon. Gentleman himself?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

East Cork Quarter Sessions.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the quarter sessions for the division of East Cork, held at Midleton on Thursday last, the calendar did not contain a single criminal case; and whether steps will be taken to accelerate the reduction of the Constabulary in East Cork.

Mr. ATKINSON: The fact is as stated. Five stations in the East Riding of Cork have been discontinued during the past year, and no further reduction is contemplated at present.

Captain DONELAN: As the police have so little to do could not their services be availed of to protect the Nationalists in the Orange centres of Ulster?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Goold Estate, County Limerick.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the Goold Estate, near Athea, in the county of Limerick, are negotiating with their landlord to purchase their holdings; and whether, in view of the number of uneconomic holdings on it, the Estates Commissioners will at once take steps to negotiate with the landlord for the purchase of the untenanted land on the estate to enlarge these holdings before sale is completed and before the land may be otherwise disposed of.

Mr. ATKINSON: No proceedings for the purchase of this estate have come before the Commissioners. They are not negotiating for its purchase, but will consider the question of the untenanted land if the estate should come before them.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the Commissioners advance money for the purchase of the untenanted lands?

Mr. SPEAKER: Notice must be given of that Question.

Kilmeedy National Schools.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland in the year 1903 required of the manager of the Kilmeedy national schools, in the county of Limerick, any condition for the giving of the grant-in-aid for the building of new schools there; and, if not, why in the year 1904 did the Commissioners require the boys' and girls' schools should be amalgamated in the event of the average daily attendance in the boys' school not warranting the appointment of an assistant as a condition for giving the grant-in-aid towards the building of the schools; and whether he will still insist on the manager agreeing to these conditions before giving the grant.

Mr. ATKINSON: The manager's formal application for a building grant was received by the Commissioners on the 30th December, 1903. The application was not considered during the year 1903, and consequently no condition in connection with the question of awarding a building grant was imposed during that year. The condition referred to was communicated to the manager in 1904, and in taking this action, which it is not intended to depart from, the Commissioners were guided solely by a desire to promote the educational interests of the locality.

King's County Evicted Tenant—Application of Patrick O'Brien.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an application for reinstatement has been lodged by Patrick O'Brien, Sisken, Cadamstown, King's County; and, if so, whether, as the estate of Captain French, Kinnity, King's County, is offered for sale, a large portion of which is untenanted grass land, a farm will be provided for Patrick O'Brien if his old holding is not available.

Mr. ATKINSON: Yes, Sir. The application will receive consideration if the Commissioners should acquire untenanted lands in the locality. Captain French's estate has not come before the Commissioners.

Mr. Cyril Browne—Irish Local Government Board Auditor.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what qualifications Mr. Cyril Browne possesses for the position of auditor to the Local Government Board; and what was his employment previous to his appointment.

Mr. ATKINSON: Mr. Browne was certified by the Civil Service Commissioners as qualified for this post. The information asked for in the latter inquiry will be found in the Return laid on the Table on March 27th.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Is it not the fact that Mr. Cyril Browne, who has given general dissatisfaction, was, previous to his appointment, nothing more than a police official in Dublin.

Mr. ATKINSON: No, Sir, the information at my disposal is that he gives satisfaction except to the bodies surcharged. His qualifications are fully set forth in a Return I have given.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: But has he any qualification for audit work? Is he a chartered accountant?

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is not the objection to the biassed nature of his report rather than to his surcharges?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Irish Local Government Printing Contracts.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board hold with their auditor, Mr. Cyril Browne, that printing is a public work within the meaning of the Act; and, if so, will he state the authority on which they rely.

Mr. ATKINSON: Under Article 33 (2) of the Procedure of Councils Order, 1899, contracts for printing are to be dealt with in the same manner as contracts for public works. The Board therefore hold, with their auditor, that Section 18 of the Local Government Act, 1902, dealing with public works, applies to printing contracts.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Has any decision been arrived at on the advice of the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. ATKINSON: I am not aware if any decision has been given. I did not give any advice on the point.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Who did advise the Board that this is lawful?

Mr. ATKINSON: The legal adviser.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Who is he?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Musical Piracy.

Sir ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the leading musical publishers have been compelled to give up publishing any new music as they can obtain no protection for their property from the law as it stands; and whether, under the circumstances, he is prepared to give facilities for introducing and passing legislation dealing with the question of musical piracy.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I have seen the statement, to which my hon. friend refers, made by the musical publishers, and I do think the case is one of hardship upon them and of injury to the public, who are, after all, themselves concerned in the prosperity or freedom of musical publications. But when my hon. friend asks me to take up a private Bill I see great difficulty in doing that. I should much prefer to bring forward a Government measure, but I cannot do that if that is supposed to carry with it anything in the nature of a pledge that time will be found for carrying that Government Bill. As everybody who has had to deal with the business of this House knows, there has never been a Government yet who did not desire to pass more Bills than they could find time for in the session, and that especially refers to what I may call Bills which do not deeply touch any great interest or Party controversy. Those are Bills which very often it is most desirable to pass, but which it is most difficult to find time to pass, and therefore I can make no pledge on the subject at all.

Sir ANDREW AGNEW: May I ask my right hon. friend whether this is not a very exceptional case, considering the large number of men who will be thrown out of work simply because Parliament does not provide a remedy for an admitted wrong, and whether, under the circumstances, he could not undertake to find time to pass a Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it is an exceptional case. I think it is a hard case; but when my hon. friend asks me to find time I think the question ought to be, "Will I make time?" With the best will in the world I cannot pledge myself to do that; but anything I can do I will do.

Mr. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): Will my right hon. friend introduce a Bill in order that we may test the House as to whether it would be regarded as non-contentious or not.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid a Bill which might be non-contentious in private hands is very apt, through some mysterious law which I will not endeavour to attempt to explain, to become contentious as soon as the Government takes it up; but I will consider whether there is any advantage in introducing a Bill.

The Colonial Conference.

Mr. SOARES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state when an opportunity will be afforded to this House of discussing the terms on which the Colonial Conference of 1906 will be convened.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think this Question quite premature.

Mr. SOARES: Is that an Answer to my Question?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should have thought so.

The Proposed Reduction of the Volunteer Force.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the proposals to reduce the establishment of the Volunteer force by 114,000 men and the actual strength by 45,000 men, he will give an early day for the discussion of the details of the scheme on Vote 5, Army Estimates.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Gentleman knows, we have given an exceptional amount of Parliamentary time to the discussion of these and cognate questions connected with the Army; and I cannot promise that other business shall be put aside in order to extend still further the opportunities that hon. Members have had of giving their opinions on the subject.

Mr. McCRAE: We have not had the details of the scheme, and as Volunteer commanding officers, from what details have been given to them, think it will seriously injure the force, will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that a reduction shall not be made in the current year?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I can give no undertaking.

Scottish Church Dispute.

Mr. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware of the fact that churches and manses are being claimed in various parts of Scotland by the legal Free Church, in connection with the erection and maintenance of which the persons so claiming contributed nothing; that many of them were not members of the Free Church at the formation of the United Free Church or even in August last; and if he will take steps to stop such procedure until an opportunity has been given of legislating on the questions at issue.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am aware, of course, that many churches and manses are claimed in various parts of Scotland by the Free Church. I have got no information with regard to the other portions of the Question; but when the hon. Gentleman asks me to deal legislatively with this subject at once, I can only refer him to the Answers I have been reluctantly obliged to give to similar Questions put to me across the floor of the House.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): Is it not the fact that evictions have taken place, and are taking place, in Scotland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As regards what is actually going on, perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper to the Lord-Advocate.

The Position of Mr. Gerald Loder.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there is any, and, if so, what precedent within the last thirty years for the retention of the position of the Junior Lord of the Treasury by a gentleman who is not a Member of Parliament.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is a precedent—I do not think there is a precedent in the last thirty years—of a Minister of the Crown not being in the House of Commons. I think I gave the precedent the other day which referred to a more important office than that of Junior Lord of the Treasury. But I rather doubt whether Mr. Loder is, as a matter of fact, a Junior Lord of the Treasury at this moment. I think he is not. [Laughter.] I observe that that remark excites merriment, and perhaps the House would like to know exactly why I make it. Under the statute of Anne, a Member of this House vacates his seat on accepting office. That is to say, he need not be installed in the office; he need not have the privileges or the duties of office, but he vacates his seat as soon as he formally announces his intention to accept it. Mr. Gerald Loder did make that statement, he did therefore vacate his seat, but he has never been made Junior Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): Will the right hon. Gentleman say when he will be able to discover whether Mr. Loder is or is not an official drawing a salary?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, he is not drawing a salary. He could not draw a salary nor could he legally undertake the duties of the office until the Treasury patent was drawn out.

MR. WHITLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the office is now vacant or not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

The Appointment of Junior Lord of the Treasury.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in selecting persons to fill the post of Junior Lord of the Treasury, it is customary to choose one from each of the three kingdoms with a view to their exercising a general supervision over the Treasury business of their respective countries which differs in many particulars; and why has this custom, which was first broken on the vacating of the seat of Mr. Anstruther, a Scotch Lord of the Treasury, on taking a permanent Civil Service appointment in 1902, ceased to be observed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The rule to which the hon. Gentleman refers is, I think, the creation of his own vivid imagination.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I inform the right hon. Gentleman that I took it from *Todd's Parliamentary Government of England*, and that it can be proved, as to Mr. Disraeli's case, up to the very hilt?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he proposes to take any immediate steps to fill up the office?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman will have full notice of any steps.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Before the right hon. Gentleman fills up the office, will he find out whether I was justified in putting my Question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have found that out. The hon. Gentleman is not justified.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

PROPOSED VOTE OF CENSURE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether he will give a day for the discussion of a Motion in these or very similar terms: "That, in view of recent events in Ireland and the revelations which caused the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, it is in the highest degree desirable in the public interest that the correspondence and other information necessary to enable the House of Commons and the country to form a judgment on the policy and proceedings of the Irish Government since the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell be immediately laid upon the Table."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that this is really a somewhat belated vote of censure upon the administration of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, who has left office more than a month—five weeks to-day. But, of course, it is the privilege of any one in the right hon. Gentleman's position to insist on a day for a vote of censure, even though it be under circumstances so peculiar and unusual as these, and the only question that remains is as to when that day shall be fixed. I hope to get the Speaker out of the Chair to-morrow on the Civil Service Estimates. On Monday I must, I think, take the Second Reading of the Agricultural Rates Bill, and I had hoped to take on Tuesday the Second Reading of the Scotch Education Bill. I understand from a Question put by the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark that there is a great desire on the part of Scotch Members to rediscuss a measure which passed its Second Reading last session without a division, and which is introduced this session substantially in its old form. I should have thought that Tuesday afternoon would have been sufficient for the purpose; but if I get an intimation that it is not so, nothing will be gained by having a discussion beginning before Easter and not concluding until some date after Easter, and I will endeavour to make other arrangements. The question arises whether the right hon. Gentleman thinks Tuesday afternoon will be sufficient for his purpose. I am anxious to bring on a vote of censure as soon as I can when notice has been given, but I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what his opinion is on that point, because if his reply is unfavourable I shall have to fix some early day after Easter.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should think it unlikely, but still I have to consult others. On the face of it, Tuesday is not a convenient day because of the Easter holiday being so near. It is most inconvenient to Scottish Members to take Scottish legislation immediately before or after the holidays.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): It would be very inconvenient to take this debate before Easter, for one reason because everybody hopes to see the right hon. Member for Dover restored to health and in his place during the debate. Manifestly it would be most desirable that that right hon. Gentleman should be present when the debate takes place.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) hoped that no arrangement made would defer the introduction of the Aliens Bill.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) asked on what day the Unemployed Bill would be taken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Both these Bills will be introduced before Easter under the Ten Minutes Rule—probably one will be taken on Monday and the other on Tuesday. After the appeal made to me by the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, I feel it would be impossible for me to press on the vote of censure before Easter, and, therefore, I must try and make some arrangement to bring it on after Easter. I presume I shall not be asked at the moment to give a date, but, of course, it will not be either on the first or the second day after we come back.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman used the word belated in reference to the vote of censure, and I would like therefore to point out that its "belation," if I may use the word, is largely because the right hon. Gentleman told us that the late Secretary for Ireland would make a statement. We greatly regret the cause of the delay.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

THE EASTER HOLIDAYS.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): How long will the Easter holidays last?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he did not wish to be absolutely pledged, but he thought the most convenient arrangement would be that they should take the Motion for the adjournment for the holidays on Wednesday afternoon, the Motion being so framed that the House at its rising at 7.30 p.m. should separate for the holidays. He should probably suggest that the House reassemble on Tuesday, May 2nd.

NEW BILLS.

OLD AGE PENSIONS BILL.

"To provide Pensions for Persons over sixty-five years of age," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir Hardie, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 171.]

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Schwann; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 172.]

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

"To provide that no Prosecution under the Vaccination Acts shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Goddard, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 173.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

INCOME-TAX.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Income-Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and five, at the rate of one shilling in the pound."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) moved a reduction from a 1s. to 11d. in the £. He did not complain because the surplus of revenue over expenditure was to be devoted to the purpose of reducing the duty on tea. Of course, the Motion would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to redeem the pledge which he gave last year, but he did not put his Motion forward in regard to that; he should leave hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they wished to attach importance to it, to take notice of it during the course of the debate. There was the obvious objection to the Motion that, the surplus having been disposed of once, it could not be disposed of again; but there was a way by which the surplus might be increased, and the method he should suggest would, he thought, give the Committee an appropriate opportunity of relieving the payers of the income-tax.

There was a current phrase that the income-tax was a war tax. In its true sense, that phrase could not be supported, in view of the fact that we had been in the grip of the income-tax during fifty years of peace; but there was a sense in which the description was true. In the first place, it was obvious that the income-tax was the first resource of a Chancellor of the Exchequer when, in times of war, he wanted to raise additional taxation; and, secondly, there had been for many years a close relationship between the amount of money raised by the income-tax and the expenditure on the Army. He had taken out figures of our income-tax revenue for the last twenty years, the amount collected and the cost of the Army in times of peace. Taking three periods of ten years apart, 1885–6, 1895–6, nd the current financial year, 1905–6, he found a very remarkable coincidence between the growth of the expenditure on the Army and the growth of the income-tax. In 1885–6 we collected in income-tax £15,800,000 and our expenditure on the Army was £17,100,000. The next ten years the amount collected on the income-tax rather declined than increased, and during the same period the expense of the Army was practically stationary. In 1895–6 the income-tax had only risen by £400,000 to £16,200,000, and the cost of the Army had risen during the same period from £17,100,000 to £18,400,000. During the last ten years the amount collected on the income-tax and the cost of the Army had gone up by leaps and bounds till this year the income-tax was estimated at £31,000,000 and the cost of the Army at £29,800,000, so that it appeared the extra money raised by the income-tax had been largely devoted to the extra cost of the Army.

The Army Estimates for this year were, he submitted, disastrous; they were Estimates for an Army not in time of peace, but in time of war. Last year the Secretary of State for War said he would not again be responsible for such Estimates, but he had been again responsible, and responsible for Estimates increased since last year by £1,000,000. It was the extravagance in the Army that he wished to aim at by the reduction of the income-tax. It was not as if they had got a good and effective Army. They were still ignorant about the organisation of the Army, and could get neither an explanation from the Secretary of State for War of his Estimates nor any promise of reduction. The extravagance had been rapid; stores were bought at the close of the financial year merely for the purpose of reselling at the beginning of the new financial year. What was to be the resort of the Committee under these circumstances? They must attack the problem from the other side; they must refuse to give the ways and means by means of which this extravagance could alone continue. If they refused 1d. of the income-tax, they could insist upon the Secretary of State for War cutting his coat according to his cloth; they would tell him that, in the opinion of the

Committee, he was spending too much money upon the Army and that he must reduce his expenditure. He particularly connected the expenditure on the Army with the increase in the income-tax, and it was for this reason—on the ground of the enormously swollen expenditure on the Army—that he begged to move the reduction of the income-tax by 1d.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, to leave out the words 'one shilling,' and insert the words 'eleven pence.'" *Mr. McKenna*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'one shilling' stand part of the proposed Resolution."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said the income-tax pressed very hardly upon Ireland, because, when it was first proposed, he believed in 1850, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day gave a distinct undertaking that it would only be imposed in Ireland temporarily, and that promise had never been redeemed. For more than half a century there was a differentiation between Ireland and England, and Ireland had no sympathy with England's enormous expenditure which alone necessitated an income-tax of 1s. in the £. He agreed in the selection of tea by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for relief, and he believed the Irish representatives would prefer to see the duty on tea, a necessity of life, reduced. But the hon. Member for North Monmouth had demonstrated the close connection between the income-tax and the war expenditure, and they were perfectly in order in forcing economy and retrenchment upon the Government by this method if no other were open to them. Last year there was a distinctly implied promise of economy given by the Secretary of State for War, but it had not been carried out. If, however, they did not furnish the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the necessary money in the shape of a heavy income-tax and other swollen taxes, the great Departments of the State would have to retrench. He had always been of opinion that the income-tax payer was one to which respective Chancellors of the Exchequer turned with a light heart, because, somehow or other, though he supported the Tory Party, and though he grumbled, writing long letters to the papers, he was a long-suffering animal, and it was this comparative immunity with which they had been able to keep the tax at such a high rate which accounted for the indifference with which they treated the claims of the income-tax payer to relief. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the income-tax payer was the first individual entitled to relief, and he could have kept his promise if he had served notices upon the Army and other Departments that the Treasury would not sanction certain expenditure. He might have told the Secretary of State for War that he wanted him to redeem his promise to effect economies. Expenditure, however, was regulated by policy, and they all knew very well that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had no control over policy. It was inspired from another source. Until the House realised that it was one of its primary duties to scrutinise and control expenditure, the work of the Committee would be waste of time for any practicable purpose. Protests were useless unless the House made up its mind that for the future it would scrutinise the Estimates and insist upon economy and retrenchment.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he agreed with what the mover had said, and he saw no inconsistency in any Member of the House voting in favour of the Motion on the ground on which it was based. He quite understood the Chancellor's position. He had a certain amount of expenditure to provide for, and he was not going to quarrel with him for the way in which he proposed to provide for it. He had a certain surplus to apply in reduction of taxation, and he (Sir Henry) thought the taxpayer who had a tax imposed upon him after the war, and totally irrespective of the war—the consumer of tea—had the first claim. The Chancellor of the Exchequer therefore would not understand him as finding fault with the arrangement of his Budget surplus. But the House of Commons had a duty behind all this. He heard, rather with some surprise, the Chancellor of the Exchequer's definition of the duties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday. He rather reduced the

Chancellor of the Exchequer to that of a Treasury clerk, whose duty it was to provide what the services required, but that he himself was but one of the Cabinet, whose responsibility, of course, he shared. This, he ventured to say, was not the view which the great Chancellors of the Exchequer of the past had taken. The phrase that Mr. Gladstone used was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was "the guardian of the public purse." The individual members of the Government, no doubt, in their respective Departments, all desired to make those Departments as efficient, and in one sense as costly, as possible, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the position of watch-dog upon the whole general expenditure of the country, had a responsibility which no other member of the Cabinet had so distinctly; and he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not forget that one young Chancellor of the Exchequer of the past, who was a Tory Chancellor, a Unionist Chancellor, resigned his position because he would not concur in the military expenditure which had been proposed by his colleagues. He did not suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should take that course, because he gathered from him that he entertained the opinion that whatever was thought necessary for the safety or good government of the country it was his duty to sanction. He did not hold that doctrine himself, because every head of every Department thought his expenditure was necessary. He would take a broader ground.

They were going to raise from the people of the country during the next year between £150,000,000 and £160,000,000 by taxation. He ventured to say this was more than the country could afford to pay. He could understand a Chancellor of the Exchequer in a time of war saying he could not stop to say whether this or that was necessary, and that it was not the time to effect economy. The time to effect economy was the time of peace, when it was a duty to reduce expenditure already sanctioned for war. Let them look at what was done after the Great War. In 1816 or 1817 the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed an indisposition to interfere with the income-tax, though it had pressed upon the nation for many years. The Tory House of Commons, because there was practically no effective Liberal Party in the House of Commons then, would not submit to it, and the Government had to withdraw their scale of expenditure by abandoning the income-tax altogether. He was not asking the right hon. Gentleman to do that. He was asking what every Member of the House believed in his inmost heart could be done by a strong Government—that the Army expenditure should be reduced to such an extent as to enable a reduction of the income-tax. The House had never been in such a position before. Twelve months ago they had a pledge from the Secretary of State for War that he would not stand at the Table to propose increased Estimates again, and now they had this enormous and almost intolerable expenditure after the war had been ended two years. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was really imposing a penny in the £ on the income-tax in order to keep up expenditure, when the House of Commons really did not understand what it was for.

He should certainly vote for the Amendment, on the ground that the country was spending too much, not only on the Army, because it was not confined to that. The right hon. Gentleman said the House of Commons was always asking for increased expenditure. He knew it did, and it always would. They rarely heard a proposal by a private Member to reduce expenditure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was in a difficult position. He had to face both his Cabinet colleagues and the House of Commons who wanted expenditure. This was his duty. It was his duty to defend the public purse, as it was the duty of the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army to defend the country in time of war. There was a perpetual war going on; and from something he said yesterday he gathered that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not look with a very favourable eye on the Estimates he had sanctioned, and he did not think he would have found fault with his colleagues if they had proposed less Estimates. He thought he would have discharged an unpleasant but a necessary duty if he had said: "We must next year spend so much and no more. I will not be responsible for Estimates which involve a large expenditure, and I will not sanction Estimates which do not enable me to keep my pledge to the House to take a penny off the income-tax." He submitted to him with very great respect that he had failed in his duty in not insisting upon a reduction of expenditure. The Chancellors of the Exchequer came and went, but the House of Commons did not, and he was sure it was the strong opinion of the country that the expenditure was increasing and ought to be diminished. He thought when they came to face their constituents it would be their view that there should be, and must be, a reduction on our national expenditure if we were to maintain our present national credit and position. On that ground he ventured to support the Amendment.

MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would make a statement as to the method of the collection of the income-tax.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): In a narrow sense that is almost outside the subject of this discussion. I do not mean to suggest that it is out of order, but I think we had better finish this discussion before we discuss particular methods of collection. Not one of the hon. Gentlemen who have spoken and have expressed their intention of voting for the reduction is opposed to the particular financial measures which, under the circumstances of the year, I have taken. What they challenge is the expenditure, not the manner in which I propose to provide for it. They have indeed alluded, both the mover and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, to a statement I made in reference to the income-tax last year. That statement was to the effect that, in my opinion, the income-tax of 11d. as it then stood and 1s., as I was going to make it, was too much to exact from the income-tax payer as a permanent contribution in times of peace and left us, from the point of view of national finance, which is even a more important consideration, too small a margin on which to draw in the emergency of war. And I said that, in my opinion, the increase I proposed in the income-tax at that time—that the income-tax payer would have the first claim to relief whenever relief became possible. I do not change that opinion; I hold it now as strongly as I held it then, but it is an opinion shared by no hon. or right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the opposite side of the House.

SIR HENRY FOWLER dissented.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon; he would not support it. If having money for the relief of the direct or indirect taxpayer, I had appropriated the whole sum at my disposal for the relief of the income-tax payer——

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said that what he said was that he agreed that the consumers had the first claim in respect of taxes put on subsequent to the war.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is the difference. I do not know that it is of great practical importance at the present moment, because I cannot give effect to my opinion. I have stated distinctly that in my opinion the claim of the income-tax payer came first of all, if I had sufficient money to give effect to it. The first duty, before any relief was given, was, in my opinion, to make greater provision for the paying off of the Debt. I think it essential to the soundness of our national finance that an adequate attempt should be made to pay off the Debt. I therefore adopted measures for that purpose before considering relief at all. Having done that, the amount of surplus I had available was insufficient to carry out my cherished wish of giving relief to the income-tax payer, and, being insufficient for that, I devoted it to the other purpose. I hardly know whether it is necessary for me to make that explanation, but the right hon. Gentleman a little while ago challenged me to reconcile what I was doing with the statement I made last year, and it is for that reason I make it.

But what is of more immediate and practical interest is the criticism which the right hon. Gentleman passed upon what he conceived to be my idea of the duties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He said that the description I gave yesterday was reducing the position of the Chancellor to that of a mere Treasury clerk. I do not know whether he includes under the description "Treasury clerk" those whom I imagine command the highest respect and admiration for their able public service and whose assistance the Chancellor of the Exchequer has.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said he should be the last person to say anything disparaging of the distinguished men who served the Treasury. What he meant by "mere Treasury clerk" was an official who had no discretion, but who was bound to carry out instructions he had received from his superior officers.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I so understood. He meant that I was ceasing to regard the position as that of a Minister with high responsibility of his own and a special responsibility for the guardianship of the national finances; and that I was regarding myself as a mere instrument to provide whatever expenditure the heads of each Department might in their discretion think it necessary to demand. Nothing that I have said gives the slightest ground for such a supposition as that. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is and always must be in a very special sense the guardian of the national finances, but I think it would be a great mistake if he so separated his interests from those of the other Departments of the Government as to allow his colleagues to suppose that they were not also guardians of national finance, and that though they had not a responsibility in his direct and immediate manner, and not necessarily all the knowledge at his command, they had not a very real and great responsibility to secure as far as in them lay that no public money should be wasted in the Departments over which they presided. I think we can easily exaggerate the difference between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his colleagues in this matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer who looks only to the desirability of lowering taxation or securing reduction in our expenditure, discharges but one-half of his duty. He as little performs his duty as the Secretary of State for War or the First Lord of the Admiralty who looks only to obtaining everything he can for the Navy or the Army, and has no regard for the demands made upon the national purse. We all have a common responsibility, and we each have a special responsibility to discharge. I have only been a party to Estimates when I thought they were necessary for the safety or the good government of the country. The right hon. Gentleman knows there is a considerable reduction in the Navy this year, and the increase in the Army Estimates was caused by the necessity for re-arming the artillery, and, as long as the Government were not doing this, hon. Gentlemen opposite were loud in their condemnation. I think it is a little unreasonable that they should turn round and denounce me for providing money for doing that for which they were willing to denounce the Government when it was not being done.

The three main sources of expenditure are military, naval, and financial; and the interests of the three are sometimes different and conflicting. I might almost say that they are always different and always conflicting. The result is that in any given year there must be something in the nature of a compromise between the exigencies of finance, and military and naval defence. When I was at the Admiralty I used to be told that the design of a battleship was the result of a compromise in respect of defensive power, speed, coal endurance, and other factors. So it is with the problems of finance. In military, naval, or civil expenditure, you must balance the *pros* and *cons* against one another; and it is the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being to see that the spending Departments make a good case, as far as he can judge, for the demands put forward, that against those demands there have to be set the disadvantages of high taxation or a heavy debt, and that due weight is given to all the financial considerations which must affect the rate of our expenditure. That is my conception of the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is to take account of all these factors, to secure from his colleagues that they shall take account of them also, and not to separate himself wholly from the interests of military or naval defence or think that his whole duty is discharged if he can come down to the House of Commons and say the Estimates of the year are one or two million less than the year before, having no regard as to the cost at which the reduction is to be obtained.

Of course, our taxation is high, but I do not agree with the hon. Gentlemen who appear to believe that it is much beyond the means of our people. I do not believe we are unable to bear even this high taxation, though I sometimes think we might distribute it in such a way as to cause less friction and to make it less burdensome than it is at present. One thing I will venture to observe to the Committee. It is the repetition of an observation made many years ago by Sir Stafford Northcote. Unless you are prepared to continue, at any rate, a great part of the taxation you impose in war time, you cannot have any reduction in the burden of the debt created by the war. It is only by continuing a proportion, at any rate, of the war taxes that you can hope to reduce the burden of debt incurred during war. That should be our first consideration. It has been my strong contention. It is upon that conviction that I have acted, and it is owing to it that I am obliged to keep the income-tax at the present high rate. No one is more anxious than I am to relieve the payers of it. I am probably more anxious than any of my critics who are supporting this Motion on the other side of the House.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he wished to associate himself with a statement which had proceeded from both sides of the House as to the Treasury officials. In his opinion it was rarely that any country possessed officials so able and high principled as those who were in the Treasury. Indeed he thought he saw some of the best qualities of the Treasury officials in this very Budget, and that was not the case in every Budget. As to the situation which had been brought before the Committee by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his opinion the right hon. Gentleman had exercised sound discretion in the course he had pursued. It was very much better that he should do as he had done in making provision for the reduction of debt, which was the worst burden of all, rather than take off taxation. There was, of course, the other underlying question, whether he had advocated sufficiently, and if he had advocated sufficiently, whether he had been adequately supported by the Prime Minister in his advocacy of that frugality which was our first need. On that point he could not agree that all had been done that could be done. The right hon. Gentleman said that we were committed to an expenditure this year of £150,000,000. It was really £170,000,000, because in addition to the budgeted amount of £141,000,000, there were interceptions of revenue, for local taxation account, £9,700,000; expenditure chargeable against capital, £9,000,000; and appropriations-in-aid, some £10,000,000; all of which were receipts and all expenditure. If these three items were added to the £141,000,000 the expenditure was really and truly close upon £170,000,000. It was well that the House and the country should remember the expenditure was not alone that which was budgeted for by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but that in addition under the present system there were irregular loans and irregular interceptions for local taxation account or appropriations-in-aid. In short, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Exchequer total they had to add £30,000,000.

Sir HENRY FOWLER: You must deduct what comes from the Post Office.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought not, but he would rather not go into that question now. Our national accounts professed to be, should be, and by Act of Parliament were declared to be, accounts of receipts and expenditure, and as soon as they left that system for the present system of leaving out of the account vast and increasing items on both sides, so soon did they get into misrepresentations and into incapacity for comparing one year with another.

But what was even more important was the urgent and pressing need for retrenchment. This had not been duly recognised. His earnest conviction was that the limits of economy and frugality had not been reached, nay, had been scarcely approached, by this Budget. There were opportunities for effecting reductions in expenditure not by hundreds of thousands but by millions. They might save several millions on the Army and some millions more on the Navy. The Navy expenditure was an extraordinary example this year of what could be done by the exercise of intelligent retrenchment without loss, but rather with gain, of efficiency. He would suggest that the same kind of brain power should be applied to the Army. He would apply it also in some measure to the Civil Service, where instances could be found of three or four men doing one man's work. It was in small economies and strenuous frugalities the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find the most useful engine for effecting reductions in expenditure, and he should have the support of the Prime Minister in that most useful and necessary course of procedure. They had heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol that he had not that support.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but at the same time I do not like to sit while he is referring to the relations between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer without saying, at any rate, that I have from the first day I took office received the fullest and most generous support that anyone could desire.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said he was exceedingly glad to hear that, but neither his own efforts nor the support of the Prime Minister had so far produced any great or any adequate economies. When the right hon. Gentleman came down to the House and stated that there was to be a reduction of £5,000,000 on the Army and another £1,000,000 on the Navy, and that he had in that the support of the Prime Minister, then he should attach high value to the support given to the right hon. Gentleman. He again impressed on the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer the absolute necessity for strenuous frugality. He did not believe the country was unable to bear the burden of taxation imposed upon it now. He was one of those who believed the country was very rich and prosperous, and that it would become more rich and prosperous so long as we adhered to our present fiscal system. But certainly the Debt had been rising in a way which was calculated to produce the greatest forebodings on the part of everybody who had paid the slightest attention to the subject. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had recognised that the Debt must be dealt with, and he had dealt with it in a bold manner. But there still remained the bedrock of the whole thing. To pay off debt was good, but the exercise of constant frugality was even better. Although those who had studied the accounts had been alarmed at the career indulged in and were pleased at what had been done to deal with the situation so far as it went, yet they were very far from believing that sufficient economies had been achieved, and they looked forward to economies of a very much larger amount than had been shown in the present year.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 219; Noes, 166. (Division List No. 135.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen

Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Chas. William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Rt. Hn. Sir John C. R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hn. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edw. Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby
Gorst, Rt Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Greene, Sir E. W (Bury S Edm'nds
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'donderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th

Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. N. W
Heaton, John Henniker
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (Somerset, E
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick W.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hn. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, W. H. J. (Dumfriessh.)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward

Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Rt. Hn. J Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'rd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H. (Sheffield
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts
Whiteley, H (Ashton-und.-Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)

Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward

Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Broadhurst, Henry

Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. R. (Galway)
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, CaptE.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander(LanarkNE
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, David Brynmor(Sw'nsea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, P.J. (Westmeath, N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan, W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, SirJosephF.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
McCrae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T., (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R.Threshie(Dumfries
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, RtHn C.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, DrE.C(Monaghan, N
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, ArthurWalters(N.Dorset)
Wilson, Fred.W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said now they were approaching the general question of the income-tax there were one or two words he wished to say to the Committee both with regard to the incidence of the tax and its effects on the taxpayer. On that side of the House they heartily approved of the remissions of taxation proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and also of his proposals, although they did not think they went far enough with regard to the reduction of the Debt. But while saying that they felt that the income-tax payer had rather a grievance against the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he did not refer to anything the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have said last year. He took the broader view that an income-tax of 1s. in the £ on a peace basis was certainly far too high. If they considered that the income-tax for the year 1900, the year before the war, was £18,750,000, and in the year they had now entered upon was £31,000,000, or an increase of

£12,250,000 over what it was five years ago, it must be agreed that those people who paid income-tax had reason to complain of the burden placed upon their shoulders.

There were two ways in which the income-tax payer could be relieved. The first was by way of reduction in expenditure. That had already been referred to, the other was by the Chancellor of the Exchequer applying himself to new sources of revenue. Expenditure had already been dealt with, but he would just like to point out that apart altogether from loans, as to which there was a difference of opinion whether they should be added to or not, the ordinary revenue expenditure for the year, including local taxation, was £152,000,000 compared with £102,000,000 for 1894. That was an increase of their ordinary expenditure over 1894 of £50,000,000 per annum, which was a very serious charge upon the nation. He was not going to go into new sources of revenue which would take the place of the present and give some relief to the income-tax payer. He would deal with one source only—the licensing duties. It had been conceded that an increase ought to be made in the duties appertaining to licensed houses, and he was quite sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have got from that source a sum equal to 1d. on the income-tax.

With regard to the income-tax itself, they had to consider whether it was fairly imposed. He was not going to deal with the question of graduation, but he wished to say a word in favour of the principle of making a rebate on the income-tax on incomes which were derived not from permanent investments but from the labour of the individual. He thought they ought to make a distinction between permanent and what were called precarious or wasting incomes. He was not going to go into that at any length, because last year they had a very interesting discussion, in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was supported in his view by Mr. Gladstone and he (the speaker) was supported in his view by Lord Beaconsfield; so it was rather an interesting discussion, and although the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not accept the Amendment which he proposed, because he did not see his way to give effect to it, and because he regarded it as unworkable, still he thought they had the Chancellor's sympathy with regard to the claim that the man who was working and establishing an income had over a man who was deriving his income from realised investments.

With regard to the incidence of the income-tax, there was another point he would like to put before the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was an exemption in the income-tax, whereby fines paid on the demise of property or on the renewal of leases were exempted from income-tax. That was entirely unfair to the trader, because if the trader made £1,000 extra in his business for the year he had to pay income-tax upon that £1,000 supposing he was going to invest it. But if he speculated in property and incurred a fine in respect to that property, if he went to the income-tax authorities and was enabled to satisfy them that he was going to invest that money he had received in respect of the renewal of a lease he was exempt from income-tax. When he raised that question last year, the Chairman ruled it out of order, because a private Member, of course, could not move an Amendment whereby the produce of any tax was to be increased, and, therefore, he would commend this question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because it was only by initiative on his part that anything could be done. With all due respect, he thought it was rather a fine point whether the mere exemption he suggested would decrease the produce of the revenue to such an amount as to interfere with the existing taxation.

There was another point on which there had been some little discussion, and that was with regard to the collection of income-tax. They had heard a good deal about the hustling of the income-tax payers during the last few months, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated that he received from more effective collection an extra sum of £800,000 within the last financial year. He made a calculation and thought the Chancellor had received a larger sum than that. What he wanted to point out, however, was that even with the accelerated collection, the collection of income-tax in England was very far behind that in Scotland, and there was an injustice to Scotland, generally in this respect. He raised this question on a former occasion, and the Secretary of the Treasury was good enough to grant a Return showing the collection for three years as between England and Scotland. The result was that it was shown that on February 28th, 1901, there had been collected in Scotland 93 per cent. of the income-tax for the year, while in England there had only been collected 53 per cent., the result being that on that date there was outstanding the large sum of £14,200,000 of income-tax. The right hon. Gentleman had been good enough to give a Return on similar lines which had just been placed in their hands that morning, and while it showed that the collection of income-tax had somewhat improved in England, the percentage collected up to the end of February was still far from satisfactory, because he found that taking that year the percentage collected in Scotland was 95 per cent. That meant that at the end of February practically the whole of the income-tax had been recovered in Scotland, and there was a very small sum outstanding of only a few hundred thousand pounds. When he came to England, notwithstanding this hustling they had heard so much about, they had only been able to collect 62 per cent. of the income-tax on February 28th. The total charge for income-tax was £29,500,000 and on February 28th they had only collected £18,500,000. So that there was a very large margin—£11,000,000—of income-tax outstanding unrecovered at the end of February of this year. What did that mean? It meant that they were losing interest on that sum—taking it as outstanding for a month only and at 2½ per cent.—of about £20,000 a year. Comparing the percentage recovered last year in England with the percentage recovered in 1901, he found there was an increase of practically 9 per cent., and if they took that upon the income-tax which had been charged it would be seen that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had received within the financial year a much larger sum than the £800,000 which he estimated as having received extra.

On the question of the income-tax there was another very interesting point as to the relation the income-tax ought to bear to the Exchequer balances, because it was on the Exchequer balances that the Treasury had to be financed for the early period of the year. The Exchequer balances were very much better than last year, amounting to a little over £7,000,000, the same figure as in 1866 when Mr. Gladstone said they were a sufficient but not an ample provision. But in that year the total charge for income-tax was only about £9,000,000, and, therefore, the Exchequer balances were only three-quarters of the whole amount of the charge that was to be imposed for income-tax, which of course meant that even supposing the income-tax was not recovered until the last quarter of a year there was money in the Exchequer to finance the Treasury really up to the amount which was to be received in income-tax. But this year the Exchequer balances only amounted to the same amount as in 1866, although the charge for income-tax was £31,000,000, which of course meant that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the early periods of the year must borrow largely on Ways and Means. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had perhaps rather under-estimated the income-tax for the coming year. He estimated to receive, at 1s. in the £, income-tax amounting to £31,000,000. He told them 1d. of income-tax would produce £2,600,000, and taking it at that the return ought to be £31,200,000, because he took it the Chancellor would get really a sum equal to the full produce of 1d. in the £ for this year because the arrears that were still outstanding from last year would be collected at 1s. instead of 11d. as last year. The right hon. Gentleman, of course, was very much handicapped by his predecessor reducing the income-tax in the previous year by 4d. in the £, which meant a loss of £10,500,000 to the Revenue. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer who made that reduction on account of the vicious system of large arrears only lost within the financial year a sum of £8,500,000, therefore the £2,000,000 had to be provided for by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thought from the figures he had given the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see that, notwithstanding all the alleged hustling, the collection of income-tax in England only amounted to 62 per cent. as against a collection of 95 per cent. in Scotland at the end of February. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman or the Inland Revenue authorities would not relax the efforts they had made, but accelerate collection. Otherwise the complaints which had been made by Scotland during the last three years would be accentuated. One gratifying feature of the collection in Scotland was that owing to this disparity having been pointed out a certain amount of latitude had been given to Scotland. But at the end of February not only was collection better than it was before but the percentage had increased, which showed that the system of collection there was far more efficacious for recovering this tax than the system in England. He thought that something should be done to reorganise the system in England in order to make the collection more speedy. It must be remembered that the income-tax payer was bearing a very heavy burden, especially in the case of a man with a small income, and he certainly did feel that some remission ought to be made in this impost both by way of the reduction of expenditure and by the Chancellor of the Exchequer applying himself to new sources of revenue and broadening the basis of taxation.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) expressed his opinion that the present time was more than any other in the past the time for enforcing the consideration of this tax. Many years ago, when the tax stood at 3d., 4d., and 6d., it was thought necessary to make the tax a fair one and make it really an income-tax, but now it had risen to 1s. and when, in spite of all the hopes they had had, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had to come down and admit that it could not be reduced, and that though it was a time of peace and reasonable prosperity he must still exact the 1s., it was obvious that the time had come when they should consider more than they had done in the past the way in which the tax was levied and its unfair incidence. This tax was called an income-tax, but it was not really an income-tax, and the persons who suffered most were persons of small means and small traders. Small traders especially were made to pay more than they should, and they were about the most stable of the whole community. They did not agitate or make a fuss, but bore the burden put upon them. He considered that the whole question of income-tax required special attention at the hands of the Committee. The mode of assessment and of appeal from the assessment required very careful rearranging. The mode of assessment appeal was a grotesque anomaly, it was the most absurd system of adjudication that was ever attempted. The appellant went before some person and stated his case, and was then excluded from the room whilst the person interested in maintaining the assessment remained behind, and in the end the assessment remained the same as before the appeal. Now that it was recognised that this tax was to be permanent the Chancellor of the Exchequer should put it upon the best possible basis, and he pressed the right hon. Gentleman to see that the system of appeals on assessment, and the mode of assessment, should be so modified as to be fair to those who wished to appeal.

He further advocated that a distinction should be made between industrial and spontaneous income. He had always felt that that was a question which the House ought to consider. It was obvious that it was politic and desirable in every way that they should not take from the man who had to keep his family and himself out of an industrial income the same amount as they took from the man whose income was received from spontaneous sources, because the man who earned his living by his own energy had to provide a great deal more than the man who obtained his from investments. He had to insure his life, and in other ways provide for his family in the event of his being cut off. There was no doubt that a different scale should be adopted for spontaneous and industrial incomes. He had always opposed the idea of a graduated scale of income-tax because he believed it would be impossible to carry it out, but this was another matter altogether. It would be a very easy thing indeed to have two different scales.

He did not regard the attempt which had been made this year to collect the revenue earlier than was the case in former years as a regrettable incident. This tax was due on the first of January, and the right hon. Gentleman was right in seeing that it was collected without delay. Many of our taxes were now paid in May or June, and if the right hon. Gentleman put pressure on those who paid late very little harm was done. It was of course a little hard upon the people that this tax should only be paid once a year. It was only since this system was introduced by Mr. Lowe that that had been the case, and it would be very difficult to alter now, but there could be no doubt that the best mode of paying taxes was at short dates.

The real question of the income-tax turned on the question of expenditure, and he strongly protested against the income-tax remaining as high as it was at present. It was a danger to the finance of the country. At one time 6d. was thought to be too high, and the fact must now be faced that it should not exceed that amount and some means must be found of bringing it down again to 6d. It would not be in order to go into the fiscal policy of the country, but it was obvious that with the income-tax at 1s. it would be difficult in time of war, in a case of sudden emergency, to find an elastic source of income. He protested against the present rate of the income-tax, but it was of no use to do it without being prepared to reduce expenditure. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were always speaking in favour of a reduction of the expenditure, but did not go into the details beyond suggesting that £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 should be taken off the naval and military expenditure. The burden on the country had been increased in many ways besides that. Those who had studied the Civil Service Estimates would see that they had increased very largely. The amount that was now being spent on primary education was simply fabulous, and large sums were being spent on secondary education, and the burden of taxation was being increased in every way. They must face the fact that this taxation must be decreased. Expenditure had increased in all directions, and proposals were now being made in favour of Imperial grants for the unemployed, for the feeding of school children, and so on, which, if carried out, would increase the national expenditure to an alarming extent. Assistance was given to the education of all classes, which he thought was quite unnecessary, and he strongly objected to the State paying all fees, but so long as the present course of expenditure continued the income-tax would have to be maintained. The tax was undoubtedly too high, but it could not be reduced until substantial reductions were effected in expenditure. Meanwhile the burden was so heavy that the Government were bound to see that the incidence of the tax was more fairly adjusted, and that the unjust pressure which existed in regard to different classes should be as far as possible removed.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) associated himself with the view expressed by the hon. Member for East Edinburgh with regard to the collection of income-tax. The view that the collection in England had been unduly retarded as compared with Scotland was borne out by the Return issued that morning, from which it appeared that at the end of February there were £11,000,000 outstanding in England, whereas in Scotland the amount outstanding was only £131,000. But the point now before the Committee was whether the right hon. Gentleman had not under-estimated the amount he would receive this year. Personally, he did not see why the "hustling" in England should not be continued, and in that case the amount would probably be found to have been underestimated. While he did not complain of the amount of the tax, he fully agreed with the complaint that it was not properly graded. He suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should give his attention to that subject, with a view to ensuring that those whose incomes were dependent upon their brains should pay on a lower scale than those who derived their incomes from investments. The rate of 1s. in the £ was not, in his opinion, too high, and he had never been able to understand why it should be regarded as so intolerable a burden; he would far rather see deduction from the sugar duty than from the income-tax. The great complaint was as to the manner in which it pressed upon some classes of income as compared with others. A man who depended upon his brains might through illness lose the whole of his income, and through having to pay at so high a rate have been precluded from putting by as much as he would otherwise have done, whereas the man who derived his income from Consols would suffer no diminution of means through illness.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN instanced a case in which a man inherited a business with a capital of £20,000 which had been accustomed to yield £1,000 annually, and asked whether that £1,000 was derived from brains or was it spontaneous income.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON admitted the question was not an easy one. All he suggested was that the right hon. Gentleman should look into the matter. Certainly very responsible opinions had been expressed in favour of such a differentiation.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: By whom?

Mr. MUNRO FURGUSON said the question had been gone into, and opinions of some value had been expressed to the effect that the tax should not be the same upon all classes of income. Although he did not object to an income-tax of 1s., he thought it was right to call attention to the large amount that was being levied upon the country in consequence of want of economy. Economies were necessary in various Departments, and in none more than the Army, where he believed the greatest waste occurred, and in connection with which economies of several millions could be effected. If, therefore, he voted against the tax it would be with a view to securing those economies in the public service which were so loudly called for.

Lord WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said that as the grievances of other classes in connection with the collection of income-tax had been referred to, he desired to bring forward the grievance under which landlords laboured in the matter. He knew it was not a popular grievance to raise, in fact he feared landlords did not always receive that fair consideration which was extended to other classes of the community. Certainly with regard to taxation they paid far more than their fair share. During the last few years the question had become a very pressing one. As levied upon land in the past, there was not much to be said against the income-tax, but several alterations had since been made. The fact that the tax was much higher than it used to be made it more important that the basis of assessment should be fairly arrived at. As a result of Sir W. Harcourt's death duties, a far heavier burden had been imposed upon land than formerly was the case. Land and personal property had been placed on practically the same footing. The assessment was now made on the gross rental, with an allowance of one-sixth in the case of houses, and a deduction of one-eighth in the case of land. He submitted that those deductions were nothing like adequate. All hon. Members desired that the tax should fall fairly, and that people should pay on the incomes they received and no more; but he was convinced that an income-tax of 1s. would mean for almost every landowner a tax of 14d. or 15d. upon their actual incomes. Those deduction were not nearly enough between the gross income and the net income. He would quote one of the greatest financiers the country ever had—Mr. Gladstone. Speaking upon the question of what deduction ought to be made in the case of agricultural land, Mr. Gladstone said that the deductions that ought to be made from gross income included the charges for repairs, building, fencing, and drainage, as well as insurance, law charges, and arrears and abatements of rent. If anybody went into the question and looked into the working of any estate in the country and deducted from the gross income what Mr. Gladstone said should be deducted to arrive at the net income, he would find that every landowner in the country was paying 2d.

or 3d. in the pound more than other classes.

He knew the case of the landowners was an unpopular cause to plead, but there was a feeling that justice should be done. He would much rather it was plainly stated that the landowners had to pay the extra amount than that it should be done by indirect methods. The professional man and small trader no doubt had their grievances, but they could always under Schedule D show what the profits of their business were. Some years ago a very valuable concession was made to the occupiers of lands when they were allowed to be assessed for income-tax under Schedule D, and he thought some equally fair concession should be made in the assessment of real estate for income-tax. The chief objections of Mr. Gladstone and John Stuart Mill to the income-tax was that it promoted extravagance, and also was a burden on the most conscientious and those who showed their profits fairly, and in the particular case to which he referred it was only just that the Government should do away with the inequalities of the tax, especially when it stood at such a high figure, and thus do justice to all classes of the community.

*MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said that although he voted for the reduction moved that afternoon he was not particularly sorry that the Government had retained the income-tax at 1s., because it would call the attention of the country to the enormous Estimates they were now being asked to pass. The ordinary man in the street was saying: "Here we are in times of peace; we have had no war since 1900, and we know that £3,500,000 have been taken off the Naval Estimates, and yet we have this large income-tax of 1s. in the £." When the taxpayers thought this matter over there was only one answer they could find, and it was that this was all due to the extravagance of the present Government. He thought it was more or less satisfactory that the Government had taken 2d. off the tea duty and had refused to reduce the income-tax, because it showed the power which the working classes had even over the present Administration. This was proof positive that no Chancellor of the Exchequer would ever venture to tax corn for the benefit of the wealthy landlords of this country. He would much rather see a reduction of indirect taxation than of direct taxation, although he did not think that the income-tax in its present form was a just tax.

One of the fundamental principles of taxation was that they should put the burden on the shoulders of those who were most competent to bear it, but the income-tax under its present conditions did not comply with that principle. The income-tax was wrong and unjust because they refused to graduate it. It was not fair that a man with an income of £1,000 a year should pay an income-tax at the same rate as a man with £100,000 a year. It was a much greater burden for a man with £1,000 a year to pay £50 than it was for a millionaire to pay £500. He might be told that there were great difficulties in the way of a graduated income-tax. He would make a suggestion for the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would suggest that they should commence to graduate all incomes larger than incomes which are now wholly or partially exempted. They should have a minimum income-tax payable on all these incomes, and then everybody would make a return of the amount of his income and pay a second income-tax on a graduated scale. The minimum tax should be paid at the source and the graduated tax would be paid by means of a return. It might be said that that would be too inquisitorial, but all merchants at the present time made returns and they were people to whom the secrecy of the income-tax was most important because they did not want their neighbours to know the amount of their business. He did not see why, by some such process as this, they could not succeed in graduating the income-tax.

He should also like to see a differentiation of the income-tax. He knew that to a large extent the death duties effected that purpose, but still he thought they might very well go a little further in that direction. He thought they were all agreed that the burden of the income-tax was much harder on the people who earned their incomes than those who derived their incomes from investments. ["No, no!"] Then they were not all agreed upon the point. He admitted that there were considerable difficulties in the way of differentiating the income-tax when they had one man companies and businesses formed into companies for the more convenient sharing of the annual profit. Businesses were frequently turned into companies for family reasons after the death of the owner, and it was certainly unfair that such businesses should pay one rate before the death of the owner and another rate after. He knew that a Committee was now considering this matter, but he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give them his opinion and advice with regard to graduation. They wanted to know whether he thought such a tax was possible, and he sincerely hoped he would be able to give a favourable answer to the question.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES reminded the hon. Member for Edinburgh that the graduation of the income-tax had been shown to be impracticable by every Chancellor of the Exchequer. At the present time two-thirds of the income-tax was levied at its source by deduction, and unless they abandoned that method they could not have graduation.

MR. McCRAE: Lord Beaconsfield made that proposition.

*MR. SOARES: You can pay the minimum tax and that would be collected at its source, and everybody who has an income above a certain amount makes a return and pays upon it.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES thought that if the hon. Member reflected he would find that what would have to be paid on all deducted duties would not be the minimum but the maximum duty. That would be the only way of levying a graduated income-tax. This question had been so often considered by successive Chancellors of the Exchequer that he did not think it could be advanced by further examination. They were told that a man who earned £1,000 a year by the exercise of his brain power was in a different position to the man who got £1,000 a year from invested property. Of course, a man who got £1,000 a year from his invested capital was richer than the man who got the same amount by his brains, for he had the capital as well as the income, but the difference between them was this. The man who earned the money with his brains left, when he died, no capital to tax, while the other man left money which was taxed to a very considerable extent. In regard to the incidence of the income-tax as such, it seemed to him exactly equal in both cases. They taxed the £1,000 a year income by income-tax so long as it lasted, but when it ceased the tax ceased. In the case of the man with £1,000 a year derived from capital his successor went on paying income-tax. Therefore, he did not see that there was any hardship. The income-tax followed the income and when the income ceased the tax ceased. It was perfectly true there was the difference that the one man left capital, and the other man left none. But that was provided for by the graduation in the estate duties. There was a graduation at a man's death which acted as a cumulative income-tax. Surely that was enough graduation for the time being, But whether it was or was not, he should be very much interested to see any feasible plan, either from the hon. Gentleman opposite, or from the body now inquiring into the question of the income-tax, as to the graduating of the tax.

The noble Lord behind him complained that the ownership of land was unduly taxed in respect of income. But the noble Lord had not established that—he had, indeed, left unnoticed certain features of our system which suggested an exactly contrary conclusion. He was waiting to hear a reference to the Agricultural Rates Act which gave a very large exemption of rates to agricultural land as compared with other property, but although himself a prospective landowner the noble Lord left that entirely out of account. He compared the ownership of land with the occupation of land, pointing out that whereas the owner could not return his profits under Schedule D, the farmer who occupied could. But there were few who did it, for the simple reason that the farmer often knew perfectly well that he was a great deal better off under Schedule B than he would be under Schedule D. The farmer had the advantage of being able to choose whether he would be taxed under Schedule B or D. The noble Lord further said that lands and personalty were on the same footing under the Finance Act of 1894 as to estate duty. The fact was that they were on an absolutely different footing in consequence of an arrangement made between the late Sir William Harcourt and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. Land paid scarcely more than half of what personalty of the same saleable value paid. The reason was that instead of being valued as personalty was, it was valued on a special scale set down in the Act. They first took the gross rental, then made deduction for repairs, insurance, management, and a variety of other items, which reduced the rental of the land to a low figure. The Act prescribed that the capital value for the tax should not exceed twenty-five times the minimum rent thus arrived at and this fictitious capital value of ten did not amount to more than half of the value of the land if sold. If land was valued at its real value it would pay, not what it did now, but about twice as much.

As to the income-tax it was one of the best taxes in its essence, nature, and principle which they could have. It was one of the cheapest to collect. It left no residue behind it in the hands of the tax collector. The Revenue got the maximum amount, and it had the very great advantage that the man who paid the tax knew he was paying it. It could not be concealed from him, and it gave him a direct interest in the amount of taxation he bore, and consequently in the amount of the national expenditure, and, therefore, a direct incentive to resist national extravagance and to support retrenchment, our great present need. These were very great advantages indeed, and entitled the tax to most respectful treatment on the part of the Committee. He wished to point out that of the total revenue of this country of all classes, only one-half came under review for assessment of income-tax, and only one-third paid income-tax at all. The figures for 1902–3 showed, according to the accredited mode of estimating it, that the total income of all classes amounted to between 1,700 and 1,800 millions, and that the gross income of all classes brought under the review of the income-tax department was 879 millions, which was, broadly speaking, about one-half. Of the 879 millions brought under review only 608 millions had income-tax levied upon it. He was not going to say that that was entirely wrong, but the remarkable result was that the third which paid income-tax paid a great deal more than it would have to pay if the other two-thirds paid as well. If it were possible to tax all the incomes of the country—he was not going to argue that it was possible—the result would be that either the Chancellor of the Exchequer instead of getting £30,000,000 from the tax would get £90,000,000, or he could reduce the rate of the tax from 1s. to 4d. and still get his £30,000,000. He well understood the propriety, he might almost say the necessity, of exempting from income-tax the smallest incomes. He thought it was right that the man who got £1, £2, or £3 a week should be exempted, but he had never been able to see the necessity or the justice of extending the exemption to the man who got £12, £13, or £14 a week as had been done. That was where a considerable alteration might be and should be made. The exemptions and abatements above £160 should be largely reduced. The effect of that would be that either the rate of the income-tax could be reduced, or, as he would greatly prefer, some of the onerous duties, such as that on sugar, could be taken off. In this way, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said in referring to the present reduction of the tea duty, relief would be given to every household. If this could be done there would be an advantage in two ways. They would get rid of the greater cost of collecting Customs duties, and substitute the lesser cost of collecting the income-tax.

Of the five classes of assessment of income-tax there was one which operated in the most outrageous and extraordinary manner. He referred to the assessment of profits from business under Schedule D. The system only required to be explained in order to show that it was perfectly unsound. The assessment was made on what was called the "three years average." An average was an abstraction dear to the statesman and ridiculous to the practical man. Take the case of the man who in the first of the three years earned £3,000, in the second year £2,000, and in the third year £1,000. On the average he had a profit of £2,000, and on that he was taxed, although his income was only £1,000 and on the declining scale. He paid twice as much as he ought to pay, and he was entitled to their compassion. Take now another man, who in the three years to be averaged earned successively £1,000, £2,000 and £3,000. He also paid income-tax on £2,000, but that was on £1,000 less than he ought to pay—and he a man rising in prosperity! The man whose income was declining, and who perhaps was approaching bankruptcy, paid double what he ought to pay—the man whose income was rising, and who was on the road perhaps to becoming a millionaire, paid less than he ought to pay. That system of averaging was not applied to Government officials or to those who derived their incomes from stocks and shares. Each paid on his year's revenue. There would be no difficulty in applying the same system to the two men he had instanced. In his opinion the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought seriously to consider whether he could not abolish the system of averaging. There was another point from which great encouragement might be derived. The rich had been getting richer, but happily so too had the poor, and in greater degree or at all events in greater numbers. That was a happy result and long might it continue. The great numerical increases of income were not in the number of millionaires, but in the number of men with from £300 to £600 or £700 a year, incomes which made it possible for a man to live in comparative ease and comfort. That was one of the most encouraging things shown in the Report of the Income-Tax Commissioners. It was a very remarkable thing that the little fish were increasing enormously in number, very much more so than the big fish. He meant to vote for the income-tax proposal, for though he had thought it might be useful to the Committee to suggest the defects in the manner in which it was levied and how these defects might be remedied, the tax itself was a good one.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said that they had had a considerable amount of detailed discussion as to the conditions under which this tax ought to be applied. He thought there must be some misapprehension as to the assistance likely to be derived in the settlement of this question from the Committee now sitting on the income-tax. As he remembered, the reference to that Committee dealt entirely with methods of administration, so that they could not look in that direction for any solution of the difficult points that had been dwelt upon that afternoon. But, if this Committee was to report soon and successfully, he thought it would be well worth the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider whether a similar Committee should not be appointed to inquire into the facts as a whole, with a view to deliberation on and settlement of the points of difficulty that had been referred to. He had risen mainly for the purpose of saying a word or two in defence of the income-tax payer. What had been said for the income-tax payer that day consisted, for the most part, of complaints about the excessive expenditure which had left the income-tax at 1s. in the £. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had had many compliments paid him on his Budget. He was not going to withdraw one of these. He heartily congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the candour and courage he had displayed; but if this Budget had been proposed ten years ago every man in the House would have risen up in arms against it. To propose 1s. income-tax in a time of profound peace was an utterly discreditable thing to this Government and the country. He had listened without any emotion to the complaints against the expenditure laid down in the pages of the Budget. He shared the feeling of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that point. He regarded as worthless the complaints made on both sides of the House against expenditure which led to this large income-tax at that time of day. Why did hon. Members select this time of all times for rating against expenditure? Why did they not make their complaints earlier this year, last year, and the year before that? If the expenditure was crushing now, it was because of the policy of the Government, which few in the House had the courage to denounce three years ago, when we were under the shadow of the accursed war in South Africa.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): What about the Irish Members?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he acknowledged that hon. Members from Ireland did, and with them he was in perfect agreement. The complaints about excessive expenditure ought to have been made three or four years ago and, therefore, he had listened with complete disregard to them now when the bill came in. But he wanted to suggest to the Committee and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the income-tax payer had his grievances, although these were shared by other taxpayers. He was afraid that the income-tax payers were themselves largely responsible for the huge expenditure; but, still, they had a right to protest that every penny of taxation unnecessarily laid upon them was a wrong done to them. The defect of our system of finance was that this and every previous Chancellor of the Exchequer, on both sides, had wilfully, at any rate deliberately, shut their eyes to sources of revenue not dependent on taxation at all. It was not necessary to impose income-tax to meet expenditure if the money could be got from other sources. One of the just grievances of the income-tax payers was that they were being called upon by two or three great Departments of State to pay money for services which were not alone services to them.

Hon. Members knew perfectly well that the Navy was not for the exclusive defence of the people of these islands. It was for the defence as well of the self-governing Colonies. One neglected source of non-tax revenue he referred to was the inadequate contribution of the Colonies towards the expense of the Navy for their naval defence. He was glad to see there had been some improvement in that respect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that at the next Colonial Conference the Prime Minister had, as he understood, pledged himself that it would be made a matter of primary consideration that the Colonies should pay an adequate share of, or contribute towards, the expense of the Imperial Navy. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke strongly in favour of that principle. They knew where they were about the Navy; but what about the Army? The Army was a much more serious thing from that point of view. He was sorry the Secretary for War was not present, but if he understood the principles of the right hon. Gentleman and of the Committee of Defence, the Army was not wanted for the protection of the income-tax payer at all. The Prime Minister had said that the defence of this country might safely be entrusted to the Navy, and that if anything was wanted in the way of superfluous security that was to be found in the Volunteers and Militia. What a big Army was wanted for was not the defence of the United Kingdom but of the outlying parts of the Empire, and if a contribution were to be paid by these in respect of the Navy, a much larger contribution should be demanded in respect of the Army.

Another grievance of the income-tax payer was the result of legislation in respect of sugar. If the Sugar Convention were abolished and the sugar tax were increased the consumer would not be indemnified, but the income-tax payer would be relieved. There was another possible source of revenue, the neglect of which was a grievance to the income-tax payer, viz., the taxation of land values. That subject was going to be discussed on a private Bill on Friday, and, therefore, he would only now say that if land values were taxed as they ought to be and the proceeds of that special taxation were handed over to the local authorities, the Imperial subvention now given to the local authorities could be withdrawn.

The State would be directly benefited. and the income-tax payer could be relieved of 2d. or 3d. in the pound on the amount now taxed. He must associate with this question a point bearing on the very energetic speech made by the noble Lord opposite in defence of the landlords. He believed, with the hon. Member for King's Lynn, that under the present system the discrimination was all in favour of landed property as against personal property. He suggested that if the doles to the landlords were withdrawn 1d. in the pound of the income-tax might easily be taken off, even after saving the rights of the tenants by enabling them to deduct their increased contribution from the rent they paid.

But the most serious point of all was one he had again and again impressed upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer without the least effect. It was perfectly ridiculous to contemplate the scandalous condition attaching to licence duties. The law had got into a condition without parallel in the system of this country. Whereas there were three kinds of duty upon some owners of property, the Excise duty had not been touched at all. Neither the present Chancellor nor his predecessor would undertake that matter, and no Liberal Chancellor, he was bound to say, had done so. But he held a settlement of that matter to be incumbent upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the future. What were the facts? They had a system under which the smallest house was charged at the highest rate and the largest house at the lowest rate. If they applied the scale of *ad valorem* duties all round by charging great houses the same as little houses, instead of the £1,750,000 which the duty yielded now, they would have £3,000,000. That had been admitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I have not admitted that the yield would give that; I do not think it would.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said it was a matter of arithmetical calculation. He took the value of public-houses as a whole, large and small, exclusive of Ireland and Scotland. In England and Wales alone the value was £7,000,000 a year. If they were taxed at the same rate as the smallest village inn the result would be £3,500,000 of taxation, which was nearly £2,000,000 more than the yield at present. The right hon. Gentleman would say, no doubt, that the high tax would probably drive them out of the trade altogether. Some people might say so much the better. But he did not for a moment believe that such would be the case. He did not believe it could be affirmed that 3 per cent *ad valorem* was a proper duty in the case of a great London gin palace and 50 per cent. *ad valorem* in the case of a small house in the country. Unless more details were given to him he must stand by the arithmetical result which showed on the face of it that by merely doing justice in England and Wales they would add to the Revenue nearly the equivalent of 1d. in the £ of income-tax. But when they had done that they had only touched the fringe of that great question. He believed from the best calculations he had been able to make that an equivalent of 4d. in the £ on the income-tax might even be attained, and he contended that the income-tax payer had all the more right to complain of the burden that was laid upon him in the knowledge that such a burden would not be necessary if the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day had the courage to look facts in the face and deal with that monopoly.

*Sir JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) said his duty to his constituents compelled him to make a protest against the continuance of the shilling income-tax so long after the termination of the war. Although he proposed to vote for the tax and for the Resolution he would do so with reluctance, feeling, somewhat like the gamekeeper who was detected attending Divine Service, that he was doing wrong all the time. He was not one of those who favoured a policy of retrenchment except that by not purchasing what we did not want and getting good value for what we did want he thought that no great reduction was possible in our national expenditure. This was an age of progress, and they all knew that what was called progress marched hand in hand with expenditure.

There were upon the programmes of both political Parties, social reforms which would mean the provision of many millions annually. Therefore he thought Chancellors of the Exchequer would in future have to exercise themselves in the direction of getting new sources of revenue rather than turning on the old taps first a little one way then a little the other way. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained that he was reluctant to branch out in any way. His Budgets were for the purpose of marking time and not to facilitate that march forward which would doubtless be the policy of the future. In that respect, as marking time, they were admirable Budgets, and he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on their production. One point he wished to enforce was that, at a time when trade was depressed, when rates and taxes were high, when everyone almost was feeling poor, that was not the time to keep money, that was largely supplied by the income-tax payer, for the purpose of paying off debt. The time to reduce debt was surely times of plenty and prosperity and not times of adversity. It was said that this affected our national credit. What a poor credit the nation must have if a million more or less made any difference. He unhesitatingly said that if that money had been applied to the reduction of the income-tax rather than that of debt, it would have been much more useful and much more satisfactory to the people of this country.

He did not wish to be critical, but he represented a great many poor income-tax payers, and although he contended that increased revenue might be needed, yet he could not agree that the income-tax in its present incidence, even in face of that need, should continue to make the contribution it now did. Until some graduation was effected that tax ought not to be submitted to without protest. Incomes of a temporary and permanent character could not be classed under the same head. The equality of sacrifice was not the same. One was earned by an expenditure of the vital force, of energy and brain, and that capital might become exhausted by illness, disease, or death, while the permanent income could be passed on intact after the life of its possessor to other people. The right hon. Gentleman last year when he was speaking on this subject contrasted the case of a widow with an income of £500 a year with that of a professional man earning £10,000 a year, and he argued that the case of the widow, even with her permanent income, was the more worthy of consideration. He (the speaker) was not disposed to dispute that. He thought that the man who was earning £10,000 thought a great deal less of income-tax than the man with a permanent income of £10,000 a year, but he was thinking of incomes, earned with difficulty, of £500 a year or so and which were in proportion probably of 1,000 to one to the other incomes. These incomes might be lessened by illness or disease or might cease altogether by death, while the permanent income of the widow would be passed on to others after her life. That was the difference between a temporary and a permanent income, which ought not to be classified for taxation under the same head. The incomes of small shopkeepers, traders, professional men, and soldiers and sailors ought not to contribute in the proportion they now did at whatever level the tax stood. Unless some effort was made to reform the incidence of this tax it would create well-merited resentment in this country. In this generation original sources of taxation were urgently needed. They had been found in the past. Sir William Harcourt devised the death duties which he (the speaker) thought would never be erased from the fiscal system of this country, and which posterity would think a great deal more of than we did at present. Posthumous taxation of great fortunes, which were in these days made with great celerity, must be sound equitable finance, and without this tax which produced £17,000,000 the year before last we should probably have had an eighteen-penny income-tax. He could only deplore that when Sir William's colleagues came to consider these difficult and perplexing questions they would not have the benefit of his co-operation and advice. On the other side of the House, when India was in want of money they put on duties all along the line and so filled the Exchequer of India. He thought that for bold finance they on his side of the House might sometimes take a lesson from hon. Gentlemen opposite.

He did not know of any rule of political economy as to the absolute incidence of direct and indirect taxation. No doubt indirect taxation was the most popular form of taxation. Indirect taxation was like an operation with an anesthetic. It did not hurt because it could not be felt. Direct taxation was like having a tooth out without an anesthetic. It made them squeal. In his opinion any great reduction in our national expenditure was impossible, and he thought the financial thought of this generation should be directed rather to the provision of a larger Revenue than of keeping down that which we had in view of the great present and prospective demands both for social reforms and Imperial purposes, and in order that the people who were heirs of the progress of the past might enjoy some of its legacies and succeed to some of those advantages which were the heritage of democracy, the birthright of our higher civilisation, and which, without waiting for the convenience of political Parties, would doubtless be demanded and probably enforced.

*MR. FIELD pointed out that so far as the income-tax was concerned Ireland ought to have been left out altogether. The income-tax was put on by Mr. Gladstone after the famine in order to pay off a certain sum of money lent to Ireland by means of a Consolidated Loan, and it was then understood by this House that when that amount had been paid the tax was to be taken off—previous Chancellors of the Exchequer had refused to levy an income-tax on Ireland because of the poverty of the country—but, instead of the income-tax being taken off, Ireland had now to pay more than her due proportion. That was admitted by the Financial Relations Committee, which acknowledged that Ireland was over-taxed by £2,750,000 a year. He agreed that direct taxation was, perhaps, the most perfect way of levying a tax, but he held they were paying too heavy Imperial taxes in Ireland.

The whole system of this tax required readjustment. He believed in a graduated income-tax. He also contended that a difference should be made in favour of incomes derived from brain work and industrial pursuits, because those earnings were derived from temporary sources and might be stopped at once through illness or bankruptcy, whilst the income from spontaneous resources was more secure and permanent. These two incomes were entirely different in their nature and in their source, and there ought to be a different application of taxation. He was aware that Chancellors of the Exchequer had for generations refused to consider this matter, but he contended the Committee was not always to take the *ipsi dixit* of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to whether a thing was practicable. In the year 1853 some inquiry was made about instituting a system of graduated income-tax. That was a long time ago and we had travelled since then on the fiscal road of reform, and was the Committee to-day to be told that because in 1853 this House was unable to find a process by which a system of graduated income-tax could be carried out it could not be tried at any future time? He was aware that in Ireland even the intermediate teachers were assessed on a miserable fee of £15. Was it a fair proposition that these poor intermediate teachers should pay the same rate of taxation as a millionaire? The hon. Member for North Islington and the hon. Member for King's Lynn both stated that they could not understand how such a scheme could be put into operation, but the House had never endeavoured to do it, and he was perfectly convinced that if a Committee were appointed to consider the question, measures would be found to carry out the ideas which occupied the minds of a great number of income-tax-payers. There could be no doubt that while some had to pay too much, others paid too little. As a business man he had had some very disagreeable experiences of the income-tax. The Surveyor of Taxes annually assessed, hypothetically, the supposed net profits after a schedule had been sent in, or in many cases not forwarded by the taxpayer. An average of three years was taken as a basis, although this average system was often misleading, for business was subject to great fluctuations. Further, competition was greater, money scarcer and labour dearer, which should be considered. The schedule was difficult to understand, and it had to be filled up within a certain number of days or the opportunity to appeal was lost. If the schedule was properly filled in in time the appeal was heard by three gentlemen who started, apparently, with the idea that everything they were told should be strongly disputed. It struck him as being a most inquisitorial and extraordinary proceeding, and one calculated to inflict great annoyance to an honest man subjected to the process. He also suggested it would be useful to the Treasury and the officials employed if a little more courtesy was extended to the taxpayers. He had no objection to pay his fair share of the income-tax if legally liable, but he objected to be worried, harassed and disbelieved. He hoped the result of this debate would be to reduce the annoyance caused to business men by the prevailing methods of assessment, appeal and collection of income-tax. If supported, he should like to organise a strike against the payment of income-tax in Ireland. The Imperial over-taxation of Ireland constituted a grievance so great that it ought to be brought forward in the most practical way, and in Ireland the only way in which it could be done was by resisting the imposition to the utmost. He intended to vote against the Resolution, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider the points he had raised and the immediate reduction of Imperial over-taxation in Ireland.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I share the desire of hon. Members that this and every other tax should be collected with as little friction as possible, and with as much consideration for the convenience of the taxpayer as is compatible with the due collection of the tax. But I think the hon. Gentleman opposite underrates the difficulty there is in some cases in securing from taxpayers the fulfilment of their obligations. The hon. Member has complained that when taxpayers appeal to the surveyor or Commissioners against their assessment, those gentlemen seem to distrust the statements that are made. But when there is an appeal it is the duty of those gentlemen to see that a case is made out before the appeal is acceded to. The hon. Member will not seriously suggest that the Revenue authorities ought to be satisfied with the mere statement of the appellant as to what would be a full discharge of his obligations.

MR. FIELD said he agreed that the Commissioners should satisfy themselves, but there were two ways of doing it; right and wrong.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There are doubtless two points of view from which you may regard the action necessary. If you are concerned with defending the Revenue you may think something absolutely necessary which if you are a taxpayer you may consider arbitrary, inquisitorial, and annoying. Considering what the tax is, how in its nature it must be to a certain extent inquisitorial, I think it is collected with wonderfully little friction, and that the collection reflects great credit upon those charged with the duty. But the speech of the hon. Member opposite formed a curious commentary upon, and I think was a warning against, those proposals which we have been discussing for the greater part of the afternoon. Some minor points in connection with the tax have been raised by the noble Lord behind me and by others which are clearly included in the reference to the Committee which is still sitting under the Chairmanship of my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon, and I think the Committee will excuse me from anticipating the Report which I shall receive from them, and understand my very natural anxiety to have the benefit of their advice and views before I express any further opinion upon such questions as the nature and extent of the allowances which are made, the system of averages by which a portion of the tax is collected, and other matters of that kind to which allusion has been made.

But the more important question which we have been discussing this afternoon was not referred to the Committee—that is, the question of either differentiating the tax according to the source from which the income is derived, or graduating it according to the amount of the income of th individual taxpayer. The hon. Member for Leith Burghs said there was high opinion in favour of the differentiation of the tax. I invited him to enlighten me by citing his high authorities, but he did not gratify my curiosity; he merely said he was satisfied that such high authority existed. I think every Chancellor of the Exchequer since the beginning of the last century has rejected the proposal as unworkable. No one has spoken more strongly on the subject than the late Mr. Gladstone, and I confess it is singular to see with what readiness hon. Gentlemen opposite waive his opinions when they do not coincide with their own, whilst denouncing with great severity anybody on this side who ventures to differ from any opinion of Mr. Gladstone with which they agree. I think it would defy human ingenuity to invent a system of differentiation which would be fair or even workable. The object of the hon. Gentleman is to distinguish between income which is spontaneous, which comes to the owner without any exertion on his part, and income which is dependent upon the owner's exertions and which may cease with his life. I asked the hon. Member while he was speaking how he would treat income derived from a business. Suppose the owner of a business desires to part with it, it is saleable for a capital sum, and if it happens to be a prosperous business it has a continuing value known as goodwill which is valued at so many years purchase of the profits. Is the income derived from a business like that to be considered as spontaneous income or the reverse? I really do not know how the hon. Gentleman proposes to treat it. The same thing applies to certain professional incomes. Take a medical man and his practice. The hon. Member argued as though the whole property consisted in the man's brain power and the physical activity which enabled him to carry on his practice. The practice has the same value. If he is unable or unwilling to continue he can dispose of it.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): If he lives.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: If he dies the practice can be sold, and some of these practices are very good properties.

MR. SOARES: One year's purchase.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Surely the hon. Member does not wish me to believe that more than one year's purchase is never paid for a practice.

MR. SOARES: No, but if the man is dead his practice is usually sold for one year's purchase. I can give instances.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Of course I have never bought or sold a practice of this kind and I do not know what is the average number of years purchase that is paid, but cases occasionally come before the Courts which would lead one to believe that a great deal more than one year's purchase is sometimes paid. But it really does not much matter whether it is one year or more, the principle remains the same. I say it is almost impossible to differentiate fairly between incomes according to any test of this kind. Mr. Gladstone in a familiar speech examined at considerable length and with great fertility of illustration different classes of income, and arrived at the conclusion that there was no one except the Fund-holder who obtained his income without personal exertion. He said—

> "The landowner must exert himself with regard to his land, the householder as to his house; the mortgagee must either look out himself or pay a lawyer for looking out to ascertain the safety of the investment proposed for his money. I do not believe there is any income which is perfectly and entirely a lazy income except the income of the Fund-holder."

I understand it is what Mr. Gladstone called the "lazy" income that the hon. Members opposite wish to arrive at. All I can say is that if their investments are of such a character that they produce equally good incomes whether they are able to pay attention to them or not, they have been more successful with their investments than I have. One thing is clear, and that is that it would be suicidal for the State to differentiate in any way against the Fund-holder, the man who has invested in the State's own security. That would be one inevitable result of any scheme of differentiation such as has been proposed. An hon. friend of mine spoke of the illustration which I used last year of a lady of small means who derived her income from a small invested property left to her by her father. I contrasted that with the large incomes drawn by many professional men. Is it really suggested that it would be possible or fair that a small income of such a nature should be taxed at a higher rate than the income of a professional man amounting perhaps to many thousands a year?

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: But what about incomes of the same amount?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not see why it should be taxed more highly than a professional income of the same amount. Certainly the professional man has far larger opportunities of increasing his income than has the widow or the spinster to whom I alluded.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: He has to insure his life to provide for the future.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: And he gets an allowance for the insurance. Mr. Gladstone when dealing with this question pointed out two means of compensation. One is a rather delicate matter to treat of, and is for the most part an illegitimate compensation, but it is idle for us to close our eyes to it when discussing the subject. He pointed out that incomes of this class were in many cases "under returned" and escaped full assessment, and that they got a certain relief in that way. A friend of mine in a certain town, who has had a good deal of experience in these matters, told me that he was amazed and astonished at the number of incomes which were so returned. I think that if there be evasion under the present tax, as we all know there is, it is clearly only under Schedule D. that that evasion does or can take place. The other and thoroughly legitimate compensation to which Mr. Gladstone called attention was the compensation made when property passed at death. Since that time the taxes on property passing at death have been very much increased, and it is through the compensatory process thus applied by other taxes that the inequalities or injustices of the income-tax are to be remedied.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

In considering the justice and equity of a tax of this kind we cannot treat it as if it were the solitary tax existing. We must look at it as part of a financial system, and we must judge of it as part of a whole. You cannot within the four corners of the tax itself make it in every respect fair and reasonable, but some of the injustices which would exist if the tax stood by itself are fully and amply removed by the compensatory effects of other taxes imposed in different ways, and falling due at different times. In my opinion the proposal to differentiate the tax would be fatal to its smooth or easy collection and fatal to it as a means of producing revenue. In 1853 Mr. Gladstone said—

> "To break up the tax is to encourage the House of Commons to venture upon a scheme which may look well upon paper, but which will end in the destruction of the tax by the absurdities and inequalities which it may involve."

Mr. Gladstone went on to say—

> "It is beyond the power of man to conduct such an operation as that proposed with satisfaction."

I entirely agree with the opinion there expressed.

I suppose I must say a word or two on the subject of graduation as apart from differentiation, although I do not think that I need at the present moment enter into the question at any great length. The hon. Member thinks he is entitled to know my opinions upon this subject. I may say that my opinions upon this subject were fully expressed last year, upon an ocasion when I think the hon. Member himself was present and took part in the debate. Therefore, I think it is really more curiosity than any actual necessity for knowledge that has impelled him to put these Questions. The hon. Member thinks that he has provided a practical scheme. In my opinion the hon. Member for King's Lynn was right when he said the only efficient way of collecting a graduated income-tax was to collect the tax on the higher scale from everybody and then pay back to them according to the rate at which they were properly chargeable. The hon. Gentleman opposite proposed a different proceeding.

He proposed that the whole of the machinery for the present collection of the tax should be retained in force, and that upon the top of that there should be superimposed a new machinery in order to assess an increased tax upon those who became subject to the higher rate. To say that we should double the cost of collecting the income-tax under such a method would be to enormously understate the expense of the proposed machinery, while it would be impossible to exaggerate the irritation and annoyance which would be caused. You would have to go through the whole process which the hon. Member for Dublin has stated has already given rise to irritation, and when you have harried and worried the taxpayer in that way you are to come to him and say—"I think you come under the higher rates. We have now taxed all your income wherever we could at its source, and now we require from you a statement of what all your income is from every source, and we require proof that your statement is true. We shall look into your books and accounts and you must produce your documents." The expense of such machinery and the amount of irritation and annoyance it would cause it would be quite impossible to exaggerate. And for what result?

I presented a calculation last year of which the essential features were that I assumed the income-tax to be 1s., and I assumed also that you were going to graduate it to double that amount. I presume that you would charge a higher rate upon every income over £5,000. It was estimated that probably the number of people who had incomes exceeding £5,000 a year might be put at 10,000 or 15,000. I think you should add to that total something to allow for the people who would be suspected by the Revenue authorities of having that amount, and I place this number at another 15,000. Therefore, you get some 30,000 people into whose incomes you will have to have an inquiry of the most inquisitorial kind and in a form far more distasteful and annoying than anything which goes on at the present time, because you will be not only asking them what is their income from one particular source, which you desire to assess, but you will be inquiring what is their income from every source, information which they will be very reluctant to disclose. Having provided your machinery to inquire into the circumstances of these 30,000 taxpayers you will probably assess about 15,000 of them upon the higher scale. I know all this is hypothetical, but I will assume that on an average the excess above the ordinary 1s. tax payable by these 15,000 people would be 6d. If that were so, and the whole of those incomes were brought under the charge, it was calculated that perhaps you might get £3,000,000 without allowing anything for the cost of collection. But would you be likely to succeed in bringing the whole of that income within the charge. You would probably lose at once £750,000 by the removal of that revenue outside your jurisdiction. It is calculated by the Inland Revenue authorities that it would be perfectly possible and a legitimate transaction to take revenue income out of our jurisdiction to an extent which would at least cost you £750,000. The Committee should remember that upon any income removed out of the area of your jurisdiction you lose not merely the anticipated increase but the whole of the existing tax. They reckon that probably you would lose another £750,000 through being unable to trace or arrive at a full assessment. You thus get down to the result that under such a system you might get a possible maximum of £1,500,000, from which you would have to deduct the allowance to be made for deliberate evasion and for all the increased cost of collection. To upset the whole system of income-tax collection and to run the risk of the unpopularity which such an inquisitorial examination into the affairs of the taxpayers would certainly arouse, would be to go counter to the experience of the past, which shows that the only safe and sure way of getting the tax is by collection at the source, and to do all this for so small a result would, I venture to say, be to destroy one of their greatest and most potent financial instruments for wholly inadequate reasons and wholly inadequate results.

If it should be the desire of the Committee of the House of Commons at any time to place a higher tax upon men of large fortune, I hope they will find other ways of doing it than those which would strike at the simplicity and the easy collection of the income-tax. The income-tax, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton has reminded the Committee, was at its inception a most unpopular tax, so unpopular that, after the close of the Great War, the Government of the day was forced not only to give up the tax, but by order of the House all the records of the tax collection were burned in order that they might never refer to them again. I do not suppose we shall ever again do without an income-tax, but it is of great importance to the maintenance of this most serviceable financial weapon that its collection shall be made as easy and as little annoying to the taxpayer as possible.

SIR ROBERT REID regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have taken up an irreconcilable attitude with regard to the demand that the income-tax should be placed on a somewhat more just footing. Everybody knew that it was unfair. Whether it could be altered was another thing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested some compensatory taxes by which they should adjust the inequalities in the present collection of the income-tax, but he did not state what they were.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I suggested it had been done by the death duties.

SIR ROBERT REID said he should most emphatically dissent from the view that it had been done by the death duties. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted Mr. Gladstone as saying that differentiation was impossible. But Mr. Gladstone had not disputed that the thing as it stood was unjust. The man receiving £5,000 a year from investments had no effort to make and no anxiety about his dependants. His sacrifice was nothing like that of the man who earned an income of £5,000 a year; and yet both paid the same amount of tax. If they could not alter the present system well and good, but if it could be altered it ought to be done. He did not say that they could make complete equality, but, at any rate, a much greater approximation to fair play was possible. As to graduation, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not shown that it was impossible, but that one particular scheme was impracticable. The right hon. Gentleman forgot, when he condemned certain methods as inquisitorial, that they were practised already in the tens of thousands of cases in which abatement was claimed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There is a great difference between asking a man to declare his whole income for purposes of abatement, and asking him to declare it in order to get more tax out of him.

SIR ROBERT REID said that he could not see the difference. In one case the taxpayer was exercising a right, and in the other case the State was seeking to exercise a right. There might be other difficulties, but this was a matter for investigation. Two or three years ago, when a Committee to inquire into the possibility of graduation was asked for, the right hon. Member for West Bristol encouraged the idea.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): I said that I thought the proposal impracticable, but that I was ready to consider the propriety of inquiring into it.

SIR ROBERT REID said it was unfortunate that, on account of one of those convulsions which took place in political life, the right hon. Gentleman ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon afterwards became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and while he was not quite so favourable to inquiry as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, there was really not much difference between them. It was true that there had been another political convulsion; but the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had absolutely refused to have any inquiry although the right hon. Member for West Bristol thought it worthy of consideration, and the right hon. Member for Croydon spoke of it in a not unsympathetic spirit.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY: But none of them did it.

Sir ROBERT REID said they were turned out too fast. He was not quite sure of the absolute fixity of tenure of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. The real fact was that while his two predecessors took the attitude he had fairly described, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer clenched his fist and said he would not do anything at all. With all due deference to the right hon. Gentleman, he thought it an unjust thing that there should not be graduation of the income-tax, that the man who had £1,000 a year should pay the same rate as the man who had £10,000 a year. He would not go the length of saying that graduation was practicable, but he contended that there should be some inquiry by a competent Committee of the House; and if the tax continued on its present inequitable basis in that respect, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be held responsible for it.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared that the income of a medical man from his practice could not be distinguished from the income of a landlord from land, because the practice could be sold. The right hon. Gentleman made two mistakes in connection with that illustration. In the first place the income of a really great medical or surgical expert could not be sold. Take the case of Sir Frederick Treves; he could not have got one shilling for his practice. That practice depended on his extraordinary genius and skill, and these were not transferable. The only kind of medical practice which could be sold was one which depended rather on the neighbourhood in which a man practised than on the personality of the medical man. In those cases, he was told, one year's purchase was as much as was usually given. But what of other professional men? Could the practice of a great barrister be sold? It could not; the practice of a great barrister, like the income of other professional men, was bounded by the narrow frontiers of a man's own personality. He was surprised that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not be able to see the distinction between the income derived from land, which could be transmitted from generation to generation, and the income which was dependent entirely upon the health of the individual. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted Mr. Gladstone as an authority against the practicability of making a distinction in the assessment of incomes derived from property and from personal exertions; but it should be remembered that Mr. Gladstone never denied that the professional man had a grievance, he only was doubtful as to the means of removing it. He put it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; could anybody lay it down that a barrister, a doctor, or a member of his own profession, a journalist, was exactly in the same position as to equality of sacrifice as a man who had £3,000 or £4,000 a year derived from land. A professional man, after he was fifty years of age, had between him and the fortunes of his wife and children, nothing but his health; and they all knew what an uncertain thing health was, especially to a hard-working professional man. But in the case of a man with property in land, whether he lived or died the land was there for his wife and family. It was to be regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer held out no hope in this matter and had taken up a far more irreconcilable attitude than that taken up by the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for West Bristol and Croydon.

That the income-tax in its incidence was inequitable was proved by the fact that a race of experts had arisen for the purpose of advising people as to how their income-tax could be reduced. He had been astonished to find that a friend of his own with a large income had been able to get off the payment of income-tax. He discovered the reason. His friend had a friend who was an expert in evading the income-tax, and was so far a professional man in that respect that he got very handsome commissions from his friends on the amount of the tax which they were able to escape on his advice. He did not say that these gentlemen evaded the income-tax unfairly, but they were able to take advantage of the intricacies of the complicated income-tax law. He might say that the expert he referred to was a countryman of his hon. and learned friend who had just spoken, and that his occupation was not above the keen intelligence of a Scotchman. So complex a question was the income-tax that it needed a trained mind to say how much one ought to pay and how much might justly be evaded. He would urge upon the Committee that the time had come for an inquiry as to whether the principles laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and many others before him were sound—that the difference between professional and landed or funded incomes, which they all agreed caused an inequality, could not be carried out in practice. He thought the right hon. Gentleman might very well appoint a Committee to investigate that matter.

Mr. **WHITLEY** (Halifax) said before the Motion was put he would like to reply to Questions put by his hon. friend the Member for Edinburgh with reference to the Return issued that day, giving the percentage of collections up to February 28th last. It contained most interesting figures, and he had no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to supplement those figure by later information. That Return showed that the result of the "hustling," as it had been commonly called, during the early months of the year had not been, up to February 28th, so effective as some of them imagined. He was surprised at the smallness of the figures of the increased collection, and he imagined that a greater result would be shown for the month of March than any other month. The effect of the increased pressure had naturally been greater in England than in Scotland, because there was more leeway to make up, but in Ireland, with the greatest leeway of all to make up, there had been less. In England there had been an advance of 7 per cent., in Scotland of 2 per cent., and in Ireland an advance of 4 per cent. He could only make those figures work out at £350,000 received up to the 28th February, and he presumed that the balance of the increase estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at £800,000 must have come in the month of March. He would be much obliged if the right hon. Gentleman would indicate to the Committee what the later figures were.

Mr. **AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN**: The Return will be pressed forward as rapidly as possible, but there was not time to take out the figures up to March 31st, and I have not got them. I have given the House the best information I could on the subject. Let me just say a word with regard to the earlier payments of the months of January and February in England and Wales this year. It was not the intention of the new regulations to make any change so far as the Inland Revenue is concerned towards the great bulk of the taxpayers, who are always accustomed to pay their taxes within a reasonable time of the date on which they fall due. The principal change was the issuing of the first notice by post instead of by hand. The result of issuing it by post was that everybody should get it, practically, before January 21st. Under the old system, when it was delivered personally, the taxpayer was not often informed of the tax he was to pay until some weeks after, and in some cases actually more than a month after, the date on which the payment became due. That led to great inequality, not only between different parts of the United Kingdom, but between different districts of the country, and even between different individuals of the same district. It was often the case that an individual in one street was served with even the second or third notice before his neighbour in the next street had received the first application. In order to make the process more regular and equal this change in the method of issuing the notice was made. The fact that the first notice was formerly very often unduly delayed caused a large number of the people not to receive their second notice until long after January 21st. Under these circumstances I think the issue of the second notice now is quite unnecessary. It has given rise to a great deal of annoyance, but I hope that in future years the procedure will not occasion any annoyance to regular taxpayers. The people I did wish to expedite were those who without any good reason delayed their payments until an unreasonably late period. I had cases before me of companies who had deducted from the dividends of their shareholders the amount of the tax and kept it in their own pockets for months before they paid it over to the Revenue. I have had cases of rich men, with incomes of several thousands a year, who thought they were not called upon to discharge a tax payable on January 1st until June, July, or August, for no better reason than that owing to the laxity of the collector, or the imperfections of our machinery, they have managed to evade payment till that date in previous years. If the taxpayers take that attitude, then there is very little to be said against bringing pressure to bear upon them to make them pay in March, in the year when the payment is due. It is in that way that we secured the increase which I have placed at about £800,000. I cannot, of course, be certain whether that is a correct estimate, but perhaps the Committee will accept it as the most accurate information that can be given at the present time.

Mr. McCRAE said he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what means he intended to take in order that England, like Scotland, might be able to pay 95 per cent. of the income-tax by the end of February. England, notwithstanding the so-called "hustling," only paid 62 per cent. of the tax by the end of February whilst, owing to more rigorous treatment Scotland had paid 92 per cent. It was only fair that equality of treatment should be meted out to both coountries.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the different portions of the United Kingdom were as far as possible placed on the same footing. The dates when the process of collection began were the same, but there were differences in the northern part of the United Kingdom which affected the collection of taxes and made absolute equality impossible.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, that Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred and five, at the rate of one shilling in the pound.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS [10th April.]

Resolutions reported.

EXCHEQUER BONDS.

"That for the purpose of paying off any Exchequer Bonds issued under Supplemental War Loan Acts of 1900, any sums not exceeding ten million pounds be raised by the issue of Exchequer Bonds to be current, subject to the provisions for the redemption of the total issue, for a period of ten years, and that in each year of that period one-tenth part of the total issue of the new Bonds be drawn for repayment and redeemed by the application for the purpose of the requisite part of the new sinking fund, and that the permanent annual charge for the National Debt be increased so as to be twenty-eight million pounds.

"That any expenses incurred in connection with raising or paying off any such sums, and the principle of and interest on any such sums, be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and, as to the interest, be paid as part of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO, BEER, AND SPIRITS.

"That the additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits imposed by Sections two, three, four, and five of the Finance Act, 1900 (including any increased duties imposed by Section five of that Act), shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

CONTINUANCE OF ADDITIONAL EXCISE DUTIES ON BEER AND SPIRITS.

"That the additional Excise duties on beer and spirits imposed by Sections six and seven of the Finance Act, 1900, shall continue to be charged until the first day of July, nineteen hundred and six."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

"That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the National Debt, Customs, and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN expressed the hope that the House would consent to allow the Report of this Resolution. His proposal with regard to the Unfunded Debt and increasing the Sinking Fund had met with universal approval——

Mr. WHITLEY: But not the method.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that at any rate general approval had been expressed, and as there would be a further opportunity of discussing the matter he hoped the House would concur in the action of the Committee.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON understood that it had been agreed not to take any further proceedings with regard to the Budget proposals until after Easter, and he thought that arrangement should be adhered to. In any case, before this Resolution was proceeded with, Members ought to be in possession of the annual statement on the National Debt and the Blue-book on the Finance Accounts.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if objection was taken he would not press the Resolution.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that while both sides were agreed as to the desirability of paying off the National Debt, many Members objected to the form of this Resolution, which tied up the exact method by which the Debt should be paid in future years. He therefore felt bound to protest against the Resolutions being taken that night.

***Mr. GIBSON BOWLES** said that although he had that very day, as he understood, been called the critic of every Government of which he was not a member, he infinitely preferred that and thought it far more creditable, than to be the destroyer of every Government of which one was a Member. Yet he had not adversely criticised the proposal embodied in this Resolution. He believed it to be a perfectly sound and good proposal, and he was sorry hon. Members opposite would not allow the Report stage to be taken that night. There were two questions he desired to ask with regard to this issue of new Treasury Bonds. Were they to be 3 per cent. Treasury Bonds, as was usual, or were they to be a new form entirely both as regards interest and as regards the gambling element of drawing? And when the issue was made, would interest have to be paid on these bonds as well as on and during the continuance of the Unfunded Debt which they were to replace?

Mr. WHITLEY said the points raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn were the very questions which made it impossible to allow this Resolution to be taken without debate. On Monday the terms of the Resolution were not on the Paper, and in consequence could not be properly discussed. Several important questions arose as to the nature of the security to be issued, whether it would be issued at par or at a discount, how the bonds were to be used in the nine months during which there would be a double currency, and so forth, which it was impossible to discuss in the remaining few minutes of the sitting. He was glad therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman had agreed not to press the Resolution.

Mr. McCRAE hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not think the Opposition discourteous in opposing the taking of the Resolution that night. According to the Budget speech he understood the National Debt was increased by £2,000,000, and that although the proposed sinking fund, including the £1,000,000, amounted to £10,000,000 a year, the new indebtedness for the current year would be £9,000,000, so that the sinking fund was only £1,000,000.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN dissented.

Mr. McCRAE said that as the right hon. Gentleman had exhausted his right to speak he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that with regard to the Question put to him by the hon. Member for King's Lynn as to what was to be done with regard to those bonds a full Answer would be found in his Budget Statement. With reference to the terms of the issue they were possibly available to the public at this moment but at any rate they would be available in the morning and then the hon. Member would get the information he required.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Further Consideration of Subsequent Resolutions deferred till To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

GREAT NORTHERN (IRELAND) AND MIDLAND RAILWAYS BILL [By Order].

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I am fully aware that in moving the instruction which stands in my name I am taking a course which is somewhat unusual. But I think I shall be able to show to the House that the circumstances of this case are peculiar, and justify a departure from the ordinary methods of procedure in regard to Private Bills. It cannot be denied that the question at issue in this instance ought properly to be investigated by a Committee of this House. Points of detail are involved which cannot be placed before the House, upon a Motion like this, with so much facility as it is possible to do in Committee. It is, for that reason, very unfortunate that the Portadown Urban District Council, for whom I am acting in this matter, were not allowed to lay their case before the Committee in the ordinary way. They petitioned to be heard in opposition to the Great Northern and Midland Railways Bill, by which they considered the interests of their district to be prejudicially affected; but the petition was not lodged at the proper date, and the Committee on Standing Orders having refused to waive the Standing Order, they are unable to go before the Committee and state their case by counsel. I believe, Sir, that the Portadown Council are deserving of some sympathy in this respect, because I understand the failure to comply with the Standing Orders of this House was not due to any fault of their own. I am informed that they did not receive a notice of the Bill of the railway company in the ordinary way because they were not the occupiers of any lands affected by the railway company's proposals. When their attention was drawn to the Bill at the end of last December, they found that in Clause 33 the railway company were taking powers to close two level crossings in the town and to extinguish all rights of way over them. An election of the council was then pending, and the matter was left to be dealt with by the new council. The first meeting of the new council was held in February, and it was then decided to oppose Clause 33 of the Railway Bill, unless the company would bind themselves to construct bridges to carry the public roads over the railway. The solicitor to the district council was then advised by a senior member of the Bar, who was consulted, that a petition against the Bill could be lodged at any time within ten days after the First Reading of the Bill. That was an error, the latest date for depositing petitions being February 12th. It is owing to this mistake, for which the district council were clearly not accountable, that they have been prevented from resisting what they regard as an act of aggression on the part of the railway company, before a Committee of this House.

That, Sir, is my explanation why I am asking the House now to consider this matter, and to pass this instruction. I will ask the House to remember that this is a dispute between a great railway company and the representatives of the public over a question of the maintenance of certain rights of way which are of great importance to the people of

Portadown. The section of the Great Northern and Midland Railways Bill which I propose to omit, authorises the promoters, as I have already pointed out, to stop up two level crossings within the urban district of Portadown. Portadown is an important town in the county of Armagh, in the constituency of my right hon. friend the Member for North Armagh, who, unfortunately, is out of England, and therefore unable to support the people of Portadown in this endeavour to uphold their rights. The Great Northern Railway line passes through the town of Portadown, and the two level crossings which are proposed to be closed by this Bill, are important means of communication between certain residential districts and the centre and business part of the town. The principal crossing of the two is known as Shillinton Street crossing. This crossing adjoins the public market and fair green, and when the council many years ago acquired this property and opened up the markets, they widened the thoroughfare which leads straight from the centre of the town through the markets and across the railway by the level crossing, giving access to a district which is being rapidly covered with houses to meet the growing needs of the population. A considerable suburb is, in fact, growing up in this neighbourhood, and if this crossing is closed without a bridge being built in place of it, the residents will be seriously inconvenienced and the development of this portion of Portadown will be greatly restricted. If the Shillington Street crossing were closed, the people living in this new district would be compelled to make a wide detour to the north or the south in order to reach the business part of the town. This would be a great hardship, particularly to working men in passing to and from their work; and I cannot help thinking that I shall have the sympathy of the House on behalf of these people, to whom time is a matter of great importance.

I understand, Sir, that the railway company contend that the Shillington Street crossing was at the time of the construction of the railway simply a private farm road which terminated in a field, remote from any public or private road. I am informed, however, that this is not the case. There is a public right of way, which has existed from time immemorial, along Shillington Street, and through a lane and footpath into the public road on the west side of the railway. There are inhabitants in the town who will prove it to have been open for seventy years. The crossing was constructed for the purpose of preserving this right of way, and if it is now closed without a bridge being constructed a most important artery will be stopped. The second crossing, which is known as McFadden's crossing, is very largely used by factory workers, several hundreds of whom pass over it four times daily; and if they were compelled to go round another way it would involve a very considerable loss of time to them. I observe that the promoters of the Bill point out that the owners of factories lying to the west of the railway will be compensated for any inconvenience which they may suffer by the closing of this crossing. But, Sir, I am concerned for the workpeople, who would be seriously inconvenienced if the most direct means of access to their work were stopped. If the Railway Company find it desirable in their interests to close these two crossings they ought to construct bridges over their line for the accommodation of the public. I should like to point out that the directors of the railway company declined to discuss this question of bridges with a deputation from the district council. The Portadown Council were, therefore, compelled to take measures to oppose the Bill, and this course has been unanimously approved by the people whom they represent. This Motion is not moved with any desire to hamper the operations of the railway company. The clause may be easily omitted without injury to the rest of the projects contained in the Bill, and time and opportunity would thus be given to the railway company and the district council to arrive at an arrangement by which important public interests would be preserved. I submit, Sir, that there is nothing unreasonable in the request of the Portadown Council, and I venture to ask the House to give me its support in behalf of the people of Portadown, whose interests are threatened by the action of the railway company in this instance.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said that if the railway company concerned in this Bill had been willing to meet in all frankness and fairness the representatives of the Portadown Urban District Council there would have been no case for the Notice which appeared upon the Paper that evening. All that was desired was to safeguard rights of way which had been in existence for seventy years. When they took into consideration the fact that the employees in one of the factories who used one of these rights of way four times a day would have to make a detour which would take a quarter of an hour, and thus be robbed of the limited time they had for their meals; and when they took into consideration all the other inconveniences and hardships that arose from closing up these rights of way it was not unreasonable, surely, for them to appeal to the House of Commons to safeguard the rights of the people. Another reason why they urged on the House the necessity of having this clause deleted was the fact that if the Bill was passed as now worded there would be no possibility of remedying this injustice, but the railway company could in future years insert this clause in their Bills and then the Urban District Council of Portadown would have an opportunity of appearing before a Committee of the House and presenting a petition. He asked the House not only to sympathetically listen to the remarks in favour of the removal of the clause but to give them their practical support, and so safeguard the people from an injustice which otherwise would be inflicted on them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to omit Clause 33 of the Bill."—(*Mr. Lonsdale.*)

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.), in putting before the House the case for the promoters of the Bill, said that the local authority had taken a very unusual course in having such a Motion brought forward in the House, and he trusted that the House would show their disapprobation of it by their vote. The reason why he asked the House to vote against the Motion was shortly this: that the House was not the proper place for the difficult questions which were involved in Clauses 31 and 33 to be decided, but they were essentially questions which could only be decided by a Committee. His hon. friend on behalf of the Portadown people said that they had been deprived of their right of appearing before the Committee, but he wished to point out that though they had undoubtedly been deprived of the privilege of appearing before the Committee of the House of Commons, they would have the right to appear before the Committee of the House of Lords before which the Bill must go. The expense they would be put to in appearing before the House of Lords Committee would be no greater than would have been entailed in appearing before the Committee of the House of Commons. He asked the House to reject the Motion on the ground that the House of Commons was essentially unfitted, where questions of law and intricate questions of fact were concerned. to give a proper decision.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said they had witnessed one of the most remarkable comedies ever witnessed in that House. They had arrived breathlessly in order to hear the Motion of the hon. Member for Rochester on the subject of Home Rule, but they were treated instead to an arranged performance of the loyal Ulster Party.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said the Motion and the date of the discussion on the Private Bill were put down by the Chairman of Ways and Means before the Home Rule Motion was thought of.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that was not the case. Even if it was it only made the matter worse.

Mr. LONSDALE asked what authority the hon. Member had for making that statement?

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he had uttered two sentences and had been twice interrupted. The hon. Members, however loyal they might be, might allow him to develop his argument. Nationalist Members came down to the House to hear the impeachment, as it were, of the right hon. Member for Stirling Burghs at the hands of the hon. Gentleman for Rochester, but what were they treated to instead? By an arranged and concerted device of the loyal Orange Party, two of whom supported the instruction and one opposed it, there was an endeavour to prevent the Home Rule Motion being discussed. Was this mere runaway tactics?

Mr. LONSDALE: Divide, divide!

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked whether there was no other night in all the year to discuss this level crossing at Portadown but that night when the hon. Member for Rochester had put down his arraignment of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. The hon. Gentleman who moved the instruction was the secretary, the Chief Whip, and treasurer of the loyal Ulster Party, the Member who seconded was the Grand Master of that great institution. And what was the subject that they chose to discuss? Portadown was the most Orange town in Ireland. When a person passed the railway station there he was in the position of a kind of Mohammedan Hadji bound to kiss the carpet. But when the fortunes of their country were in the balance, when the great question of the dismemberment of the Empire was to be under discussion, these loyal Ulster Gentlemen occupied the time of the House in the interests of a level crossing at Portadown.

Mr. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): Is the hon. Member in order in wasting the time of the House in this way?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not felt called upon to interfere, but I hope the hon. Member will not be long.

Mr. HEALY said that but for the fact that he had been interrupted three times he would have been done long ago. He asked the House what reality there was in all the Motions which had been placed on the Notice Paper for a time when the Empire had been invited to watch the development of the question of Home Rule. The Party opposite had balloted fourteen Tuesdays in succession, and at last fortune had gilded the eagles of Rochester. He rose for the purpose of expressing his sympathy with the hon. Member for Rochester, who was sitting on the back bench seeing his valuable time devoured by the Ulster wolves.

Mr. SPEAKER: In the speech of the hon. Member there is too much on the question that is to follow and too little on the question now before the House.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he appreciated that ruling to the full. He would only express the regret he felt at the delay in the introduction of the important business which the House had met to consider, through the ill-considered action of the hon. Gentlemen opposite. He moved the adjournment of the debate in order that the hon. Member for Rochester might be able to proceed with the Motion he had on the Paper. It was unseemly that time should be wasted even by the Ulster Orange Party on the trivialities which had been brought forward.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned;"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

HOME RULE.

Mr. TUFF (Rochester) rose to call attention to the speeches of certain Members of the Opposition on the question of Home Rule for Ireland, and to move a Resolution. He said: In moving the Resolution that stands in my name I feel quite certain that the House will give me some indulgence in making what is almost my maiden speech. I appreciate the fact that I have undertaken to speak on a subject which is of the greatest possible importance, and in which the keenest interest is taken by Parties in this House and also outside. I am aware that the great question of Home Rule for Ireland has been debated in this House for twenty years or more, and it would be presumption on my part to attempt to obtrude my personal views on the subject. I have been at some pains to discover what the present views of prominent Members on the Opposition side are with regard to Home Rule, and in accordance with my Notice I will submit them for your consideration. Lord Rosebery, speaking at Epsom on 18th March, 1905, said—

"An independent Parliament in Dublin and the Parliament that exists in London do, in their strictest sense, represent my idea of duality. If Mr. Redmond is in favour of that, I venture to tell him explicitly that he has yet to win over, not merely the majority, but the great mass of the nation that inhabits Great Britain, to his views."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, speaking at Manchester on 13th May, 1904, said—

"Whether they had that, or a settlement which had been called by the name of administrative Home Rule, in either case he thought, and hoped, he was not wrong in saying for that great assembly, representing so much, that when the Liberal Party was asked to unsay all it had been saying with such vehemence, fortitude, steadfastness, and constancy for all these years—to unsay all these things was what would not be, what could not be, and what ought not to be."

Lord Rosebery, speaking in the City of London on 9th March, 1905, said—

"You may do much for Ireland, you may do her inestimable good by proceeding on grounds of administrative reform, but there is one thing to which no statesman will ever expose his country, and that is the curse of dual government at the heart of the Empire. What are the results of dualism—a vulture gnawing at the very vitals of the Empire, and we, at any rate, may be forgiven who will not expose our Imperial heritage and our Imperial future to any such danger."

The hon. and learned Member for Waterford, speaking at Derry on December 2nd, 1904, said—

"They (the Nationlists) had forced one great English Party to accept the doctrine of Home Rule, and to-day Home Rule was a living issue at every election in England, Scotland, and Wales; and in many of these elections Home Rule would be the dominant factor in the decision come to."

Now we will turn to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Fife, who, I am sorry is not in his place. In a manifesto written to the Chairman of the East Fife Liberal Association, 1st March, 1902, he said—

"If we are honest we must ask ourselves this practical question: 'Is it to be part of the policy and programme of our Party that, if returned to power, it will introduce into the House of Commons a Bill for Irish Home Rule?' The answer, in my judgment, is 'No.'"

Now, after deep consideration and with the greatest possible respect, I turn to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. In the House of Commons, 4th May, 1904, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh who had just sat down had referred to a matter which was rather beyond their scope that night—namely, the question of the self-government of Ireland. That, of course, was the remedy which they (the Radicals) would apply."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Did I say "Radicals"? That is your word, not mine.

MR. TUFF: I would not dare to put any word of mine into the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman. [Cries of "Withdraw."] I do not withdraw, I substantiate it. I stand by the words I have read. [Cries of "Quote."]

MR. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. Gentleman is reading a report of the right hon. Gentleman's speech.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I interrupted the hon. Gentleman—for which I apologise—because, while professing to quote my words, he stated that I said something about the remedy which the Radicals would apply. I do not think that I ever in this House spoke of myself as the Leader of the Radical Party.

MR. TUFF: This is almost my first occasion to receive a compliment from the right hon. Gentleman, and I only hope that I am entitled to it. I am sorry that the leaders of the Opposition have not turned up in greater force this evening. I should like to tell the House what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick said. Speaking at Northallerton on March 15th, 1905, he said—

"If the Liberal Party had not a good majority without the Irish Party, his opinion was that they had better not take office at all."

Now let us see what the hon. and learned Member for Waterford has to say. Speaking at a banquet held in London on March 16th, 1905, he said—

"He did not himself think that Lord Rosebery's speech was likely to intimidate the Liberal Party, but if it did then so much the worse for the Liberal Party. [Cheers.] The position of the Irish Party was perfectly clear. They would support and keep in office in the next Parliament no Liberal Party, no Liberal Government, which took the Rosebery view of Home Rule for Ireland. [Great cheering.] And in a spirit of the most complete friendliness to the Liberal Party he gave them this word of warning, that even if they succeeded in the coming election in returning to the House of Commons with a majority which was nominally independent of Irish votes—a thing that he thought a good many were anxious for, but which he did not himself believe would take place—that even if they returned in that position to the House of Commons they would find the government of Ireland a sheer impossibility."

We have now to go back to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Fife. Speaking at Ladybank, September 28th, 1901, he said—

"For my own part, I believe as strongly as ever I did in the two governing principles, namely, the necessity of maintaining the universal, absolute, and unimpaired supremacy of the Imperial Parliament."

Now we go back again to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. I have been most careful in my references, and if I am wrong the mistake can be quickly discovered. Speaking in the House of Commons on February 21st, 1905, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"Those who, like myself, have supported and still continue to support a policy of thorough and fundamental alteration in the whole system of Irish Government."

I hope hon. Members will follow me, and notice that I have given a few mild extracts along with some of heavier weight. Lord Rosebery, speaking in the City of London, March 9th, 1905, said—

"It is not possible for any Government, however potent it may deem itself, to bring in any measure for establishing a Parliament, however subordinate, in Dublin, without first having made it a matter of special appeal to the country."

The noble Lord the Leader of the Opposition in another place, speaking at Wandsworth, 8th March, 1905, said—

"That unless they gave more self-government to Ireland, the state of the country would be as bad in the future as it had been in the past."

There is another Member of the Liberal Party, who, though not a leader at the moment, is, we are given to understand, going to be one. I am sorry that he is not in his place. I refer to the hon. Member for Carnarvon. Speaking at Carnarvon on October 18th, 1904, he said—

"He agreed with the chairman (Mr. J. E. Graves) that there was no hope of reintroducing such a Home Rule Bill as that of 1886 or 1893. The question must be faced as a matter of business. They must have an effective Parliament for the whole country, and they could not have Home Rule for any one section without granting it to all. Legislation under existing conditions was impossible."

The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries Burghs, speaking in the House of Commons, February 3rd, 1904, said—

"It was quite unnecessary to enter on an argument in favour of this policy of Home Rule, or upon any question of machinery, or how such a policy was to be carried out. It was a question of principle. The policy was brought forward, not as a matter of plain expediency, but as a matter of sacred duty."

Another of the accepted and accredited leaders of the Liberal Party of the future who is absent—[An HON. MEMBER: Go on.] I will ask the hon. Gentleman who interrupted me if he is making the speech, or if I am. The junior Member for Oldham, speaking at Sheffield on March 31st, 1905, said—

"It was all nonsense to pretend that the Irish question presented an insuperable obstacle to their agreement. Of course Mr. Morley was a Gladstonian Home Ruler; Lord Rosebery was opposed to Home Rule; but there was no question of a Home Rule Bill being brought forward in the next Parliament. It was a physical impossibility."

The hon. and learned Member for Waterford is so deeply interested in this question that I must be excused if I mention him a little too often. I will not mention one of his English speeches at the moment I will tell the House what he said in America. Speaking at the Convention in America on August 31st, 1904, he said—

"I have come here to say to you that in our deliberate judgment all the efforts of the Irish race ought now to be concentrated on a determined advance towards the road to Home Rule. Home Rule is our platform to-day. National self-government, and that alone, is the plank on which we stand.

"I believe that it would be just as possible for Ireland to have a prosperous and free separate existence as a nation as Holland, or Belgium, or Switzerland, or other small nationalities."

Now we will go back again to Lord Rosebery. Speaking in London on June 10th, 1904, he said—

"There is one further stumbling-block in the way of some of our friends, and some who would be our friends if this stumbling-block were removed. It is the stumbling-block of Irish Home Rule, by which we understand the establishment of a Parliament in Dublin. But

I am perfectly certain, as certain as that I am standing here, that there is no possibility whatever of the next Liberal Government establishing, or attempting to establish, a Parliament in Dublin."

What does the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford say to that? On October 23rd, 1901, he said—

"Rather than be held by force, as we are to-day, under the British Empire, we would prefer to be linked with the meanest free country on the face of the earth."

[An Hon. Member: Next please.]

I have a few more here, and I intend to read them before I sit down. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Leeds, in a letter sent from the Liberal Central Association, Parliament Street, London, S.W., writes—

"So far as I am concerned, I am a Home Ruler, but as I have frequently said to my constituents, the Nationalist Party has accepted, at any rate for the present, the alternative policy of the Conservative Party, and it is essential that we should see what result that policy is likely to have on Irish opinion and what are to be its further developments."

We will see what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford has to say to that. In the House of Commons, on February 3rd, 1904, he said—

"Now I repeat that for us there is no such thing as an alternative policy to Home Rule. If your government in Ireland were as good as it is notoriously and admittedly bad, we would be still Home Rulers. Our position is that we assert we have the right to rule ourselves. Our position is perfectly plain. We are a Party of independent opposition. We are in opposition to every Government that does not accede to our demand for legislative freedom. For myself, I have sat in opposition in this House for twenty-three years. I have taken part in the overthrow by Irish votes of Conservative Governments and of Liberal Governments. I know not, of course, what the future may have in store for us, but I have a pretty clear conception of what our duty is. In my judgment, it is our duty to offer a vigorous and active opposition to the Government unless they show that they have made some appreciable advance on the road to Home Rule."

Mr. A. Birrell, K.C., President of the National Liberal Federation, speaking at Oxford on June 11th, 1904, said—

"The Liberals were supposed to be at loggerheads about Ireland. It was utterly out of the question in the coming Parliament to stand up by the Treasury Bench and introduce either of Mr. Gladstone's great Home Rule measures. No such measure, by whomsoever introduced, could possibly pass, and, therefore, to hold it up as a thing which was to affect people's votes was ridiculous; it was a bogey, a bugbear."

The noble Lord the Leader of the Opposition in another place, writing in March last on the Liberal policy, said—

"At home, also, local government needs development, and the powers of local bodies are susceptible of judicious extension. Nor can we in this connection ever forget Ireland. Liberals will always be ready at the proper moment to extend the application of the principle of self-government in that country, whose sufferings from misgovernment have so often been a danger to the State."

The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Fife, speaking at Canterbury on March 31st, 1905, said—

"That Mr. Tuff's Motion was intended to make mischief between the Liberal Party and the Irish Party. Surely this would not be possible, when we remember the close alliance there is between them, and how much the Liberal Party rely upon the Irish representatives to bring about the downfall of the Government."

Hon. Members saw in the all-night sitting of last week what happy and united friends they are. The right hon. Gentleman also suggested that it was my intention to make mischief between the Liberals themselves. There is not much fear of that, especially as it seems to be quite understood that all the important offices of the State are to be triplicated in order that there may be room for a good proportion of Liberal aspirants to office. I was very glad, however, to see that the right hon. Gentleman concluded his speech by saying that it was not their intention to run away, and that he agreed that the time had come when the House of Commons might very well devote three hours to a discussion of the present position of the Irish question.

I am not going to detain the House any longer. [Opposition cries of "Go on."] I make a strong appeal to all hon. Members to show the country by their presence in the lobbies what their opinion and their idea is as to Home Rule for Ireland. Do they wish Ireland to have a separate Parliament, or do they wish for a loyal, devoted, and united Parliament? I beg to move.

*Sir WALTER PLUMMER (Newcastle-on-Tyne): After the manner in which the House has listened to the views just expressed by the hon. Member for Rochester, perhaps they will allow me, as still a young Parliamentary hand, to congratulate him upon what is virtually his maiden speech. By the fortune of the ballot he has not only been able to address us upon an important question of the day, and one which after the next general election will become an important question of the hour, but he has been able to please the Party opposite by preparing for them that which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife has foreshadowed as an agreeable and profitable evening. It has been said, and I believe sometimes with great truth, that the pleasures of anticipation not infrequently exceed the pleasures of realisation, and I am not altogether sure that in the case of the right hon. Gentleman that may not be the case to-night. The Resolution which I have the honour to second proceeds upon the lines with which we have been made very familiar of late by the Party opposite, of endeavouring to arrive at and analyse the policy likely to be adopted by those who may form a future Government. The precedent has been established by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and, however awkward it may now be, I do not think they can object to the same tactics being applied to them. No doubt we shall be told that circumstances alter cases, and that the circumstance that we are in office and they are not—though very anxious to be—makes permissible and legitimate in the one case that which in the other is not permissible. The whole argument of hon. Gentlemen opposite has, however, been for many months that we are an expiring Government. The charge has been reiterated again and again, and in this matter the Opposition is something like the long-expectant heir, who in somewhat indecent haste complains—to use the words the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich used the other night, though in a different connection—that the present occupant will not get on with his dying. I am glad that hon. Gentlemen opposite do not take exception to that interpretation of the view they take on this question, because it proves the right to base this Resolution upon that which it is practically based—namely, the assumption and presumption upon the part of Gentlemen opposite that they will come into power at the next general election.

I am quite prepared to admit that there are two difficulties which confront the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and which, indeed, are inherent to this process of endeavouring to analyse in advance future actions and future intentions. The first is that he cannot quite know before the general election whether the incoming Government will have the sweeping majority which they so desire, and which will enable them to snap their fingers at the Irish Party in this House, and postpone Home Rule to the Greek Kalends—or whether they will only be returned to office instead of to power. It is conceivable that the right hon. Gentleman will declare that this Motion is premature, though if we are supposed to be, as hon. Gentlemen opposite do suppose that we are, on the eve of a general election, at which they are certain to be returned by a sweeping majority, I do not see on what grounds the Motion can be declared to be premature, unless it is upon the question whether they will be returned to power or merely to office. For upon that distinction a very great deal will depend. If they are returned at all, office is, of course, assured; but power is quite a different thing; and if I may employ a quotation which has been used before in this House by a former Member for Newcastle—Mr. Joseph Cowen—I would say with respect to that, "There's the rub." But if the belief in a Parliament for Ireland amounts to a sincere conviction on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, his recommendation to the electors will not depend upon considerations of policy, nor upon popularity, nor even upon questions of time. The Resolution does not ask the right hon. Gentleman what he proposes to do after the general election, but it asks him what he proposes to recommend to the electors of the country.

The other difficulty is that the right hon. Gentleman does not know and cannot tell who may constitute or may not constitute this future Government. The demand greatly exceeds the supply. I venture to think that I who know who would like to be and expect to be members of that Government, and in this latter category I should like to place an hon. Member who is conspicuous by his absence to-night, and for whose absence there are, I think, reasons not difficult to assume—I mean the junior Member for Oldham, who observed the other day, in a speech at Sheffield, in that self-assumed *role* which he has already taken of one of the coming Leaders of the Liberal Party—that there was no question of a Home Rule Bill being brought forward in the next Parliament or I presume of Home Rule being recommended to the electors. Now this sweeping assertion which, if I did not know the hon. Member fairly well, I should at once have assumed to have been made after consultation with his recognised leader in this House—this sweeping assertion is no doubt also made upon the assumption that he and his new-found friends will have a sweeping majority at the next general election, and that under such circumstances they would be able to do just what they like, irrespective of the eighty votes led by the hon. Member for Waterford, fortified, as I for one thoroughly believe they will be, by some thirty members of the Labour Party, which will be an increasing factor in the new Parliament. The Member for Oldham may know or may not know a great deal, but he does not know everything—and until and unless he is in the councils of the leaders of the Liberal Party he has no right to lay down the policy to be pursued by that Party in the next Parliament, or to rule certain things out of Court in this light and airy way. I have heard of a great and distinguished man in the last century whose learning was so great and whose opinion of that learning was so high that it used to be said of him: "I am the Master of Balliol College; what I know not is not knowledge." The hon. Member for Oldham seems to be qualifying as a twentieth century Jowett. This Resolution is, however, mainly concerned, not with would-be or expectant leaders, but with the official Leader of the Party opposite—with him who, having borne the burden and the heat of the day has, I venture to think, a right to expect the highest honour when the time comes. But we want to know, in view of their conflicting statements, whether the right hon. Gentlemen opposite remain on the respective sides of the fence which hitherto they have occupied with regard to Home Rule, and in respect to those who are now sitting upon that fence upon which side they mean to climb down. We want to know that, too, before the general election, for if we wait until after the general election I can readily conceive circumstances in which the question of the adoption of Home Rule will not depend upon the leaders opposite, or even upon the hon. Member for Oldham, but will rest with the hon. Member for Waterford and his Party, reinforced by the Labour Party. As the House well knows, there is an historical illustration of the ease with which a proposed course of action with regard to Home Rule before a general election can be suddenly changed after the result of that general election has become known.

Now, let me direct attention to some of the conflicting statements of the leaders of the Party opposite in respect to Home Rule. First, however, let me clear the air by quoting one of the declarations of the hon. Member for Waterford, who leads his Party in this House with conspicuous ability, and with whom, whatever other faults we may find with him, we cannot quarrel on the score of ambiguity. On St. Patrick's Day the hon. Member for Waterford said—

> "They would support and keep in office in the next Parliament no Liberal Party, no Liberal Government, which took the Rosebery view of Home Rule for Ireland."

There we have a definite ultimatum, which matters little so long as no Liberal Government exists, but which may matter a great deal after the next general election. What, then, are the Rosebery views in respect to Home Rule, and how far are hon. Gentlemen opposite in agreement or conflict with them. Let us for a moment try and separate the sheep from the goats. Here is a recent statement of Lord Rosebery—

> "There is one thing to which no wise statesman will ever expose his country, and that is the curse of dual government at the heart of the Empire."

But, lest anyone would think that these are hasty expressions, let me quote what the noble Earl said three years ago—

> "I am not prepared at any time, or under any circumstances to grant an independent Parliament in Dublin, and when I am asked for an independent Parliament, or for anything

that is to work up to an independent Parliament, I will tell you plainly that it is not on my slate."

Now, having stated the Rosebery view, let me refer for a moment to the opinions of other Liberal leaders on the same subject. Take Lord Spencer. In another place that noble Lord said—

> "They heard that Home Rule must be given up by the Liberal Party. He confessed that he could not agree to that himself. If the Liberal Party gave up Home Rule he must take a back seat."

I do not wish to repeat quotations given by the hon. Member for Rochester, but I should like to give this summing up of the opinions I have quoted to the House by the right hon. Member for East Fife, which, let me say in passing, I prefer to the equivocal reply which he gave to a Scotch heckler, who asked—

> "Should the Liberal Party be returned to power, will Mr. Asquith support Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman in introducing a Home Rule Bill for Ireland in Parliament?"

to which the right hon. Gentleman replied—

> "That is purely an academical question which is of no practical or political urgency."

Here is the unequivocal opinion written to the chairman of the East Fife Liberal Association—

> "If we are honest" (mark well that preamble) "we must ask ourselves this practical question: 'Is it to be part of the policy and programme of our Party that, if returned to power, it will introduce into the House of Commons a Bill for Irish Home Rule?' The answer, in my judgment, is 'No.'"

Of course if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs is going to endorse the opinion I have just quoted, and to join Lord Rosebery in saying that under no circumstances will he grant a separate Parliament to Ireland such as Mr. Gladstone foreshadowed, then the situation will be completely altered in spite of his past assurances, and this debate will not have been without its value. But, if the contrary is the case, let it be stated here and now, or let the Liberal leaders take care to meet together quietly some time before the Liberal Federation meets in Newcastle next month, and agree upon some clear pronouncement of policy with regard to Home Rule in the new edition of the Newcastle programme. But if the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Liberal Party in this House disagrees profoundly with Lord Rosebery and the right hon. Member for East Fife and would be prepared to carry out in the next Parliament, reluctantly and under force of circumstances, and to recommend Home Rule to the electors at the general election, then let him say so here and now, without delay. The right hon. Gentleman has accused us of obtaining blank cheques from the country. Let there be none of it on his part; no seeking to get into power on the strength of free trade and then to remain in power on the strength of Home Rule. I believe that directly the election is over, assuming the anticipation of hon. Members opposite is achieved, free trade and the fiscal question, though still important in the country, will no longer be a burning Parliamentary question, but will be supplanted in importance in this House by the question of Home Rule.

In such circumstance I would ask the Leader of the Party opposite—"Is he, or is he not, going to join his Chief Whip and 'stand or fall' by Home Rule," as Home Rule was understood in this House and the country, and by the Irish Party in the time of Mr. Gladstone? The right hon. Gentleman has two answers, one of which he will probably give. The first is the familiar formula—"Put me in, and then I will tell you." As to which, I imagine the hon. Member for Waterford saying—"In vain is the net spread in sight of the bird." The other answer is—"Yes, I will stand by Home Rule at the proper time," which is not in the next Parliament, which cannot be in the Parliament following the next, because whatever consensus of opinion there may be as to the Party opposite being returned at the general election, there is an equal consensus of opinion that a little Liberal administration will go a long way with the country, and it will not, therefore, be until the third Parliament from the present time that the Liberal Party or possibly the Labour Party will again have an opportunity of bringing forward a Home Rule Bill; but by then where will the "standing by Home Rule" be on the part of the leader opposite? By then, I doubt not, the right hon. Gentleman will have met his reward and be occupying a seat in that other House of Parliament, where the Irish Party cease from troubling, and the weary Liberal is at rest.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the conflicting statements which have been made by the various leaders of the Opposition on the subject of Home Rule, it is expedient that the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Stirling Burghs, should explicitly declare whether or not it is his intention to recommend to the electors of the United Kingdom the policy of establishing a Parliament in Ireland."—(*Mr. Tuff.*)

*Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said he wished to ascertain from Mr. Speaker his formal ruling on the Amendment which stood in his name. This was a point of considerable importance not only in this debate but in other debates of a similar nature. He submitted that the Amendment was in order with the Notice of Motion given by the hon. Member for Rochester, although, perhaps, not strictly in order with the Resolution which had been founded on the Notice of Motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: An Amendment must be relevant to the Question put from the Chair. The Question put from the Chair relates to Home Rule; but the Question raised by the Amendment of the hon. Member relates to the administration of Irish affairs by the present Government. That is a different Question altogether. The Amendment is not in order.

*Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Speaker, a stranger situation than this never presented itself to the House of Commons. A stranger Motion never appeared on the Notice Paper of the House of Commons. The hon. Member for Rochester seeks to elicit from the Member for Stirling Burghs—why he should seek to rob my constituency of the poor honour of the definite article I cannot understand; I will take the liberty of putting it in, and talking of, the Stirling Burghs—a statement of the advice which he will submit to his electors at the election. The election! Here is courage for you. I thought it was the word they never mentioned; an idea that only visits them in their worst dreams; its introduction is little short of profanity, but it marks a falling-off from the high standard pursued by the Party—no, not by the Party opposite, but by the Government opposite; I am not sure that they are unanimously supported by their Party [An Hon. Member: Oh, yes.]—the high standard, I say, that they have set themselves in living up to the full limit of the Septennial Act. Sir, this is a new thing in the House of Commons. This kind of interrogation is a thing which all Scotch Members have encountered on the platform. We call it heckling. It is a wholesome practice between a Member and his constituents. I believe the word, and in some poor degree the practice, has, like many other good things, come south into England and established itself here; but this is the first occasion of it in the House of Commons.

The hon. Member who introduced the Motion is a recent addition to our number, and he may have acted in the innocence of uninstructed adolescence. His Parliamentary childhood has been passed in strange scenes, and he probably has thought that one irregularity more or less does not much matter. But I am not so sure that the hon. Member can claim all the immunity which attaches to a young Member. I remember many years ago the late Mr. Bernal Osborne saying in this House when a Member claimed some indulgence on this account, "He may be a young Member, but he is evidently an old practitioner." The hon. Member by co-operation with other Members sitting around him obtained this great opportunity, and no doubt the Motion which stands on the Paper is the result of the co-operation of himself and of those other Members under high official sanction. That being so, I am afraid I am not able to congratulate the authors of the Motion either upon their ingenuity or their adroitness. I do not profess to be an accomplished draftsmen by any means, but if the hon. Member had come to me I could have drawn a Motion of a much better and more effective type. What does he do? He calls attention to a variety of declarations on the subject of Home Rule. His speech, in fact, consisted almost entirely of a recital of these declarations. I would complain of them first of all that they were not very well grouped; but the Members of this House, at least, whose opinions were quoted, I trust, before this debate finishes, will have an opportunity of explaining and justifying their statements and sentiments; and, after all, these are only the signs of a healthy, intelligent, and independent consideration of a difficult and complex subject. Having recited these declarations, which it is no part of my duty to deal with, the hon. Member fastened upon me, and called upon me to stand and deliver. But he seems to be ignorant of the fact that his leader—not, I believe, his fiscal leader—has already informed him that in his opinion—and that should be final with the hon. Member—my speech on the Amendment to the Address moved by the hon. Member for Waterford was saturated with Home Rule. So that ought to dispose of me in the estimation of the hon. Member.

Sir, this Motion, I fear, is not to be attributed so much to innocent curiosity as to my views on Home Rule as to a desire possibly to furnish to the Unionist Party a field day in which they could disport themselves with some appearance of unity. It was no doubt thought that the hon. Member would regain that confidence which deserted him when his leader's policy has been called in question in the House of Commons, and make up for the incoherence and pusillanimity of the Party opposite by leading an attack in force upon another policy altogether, and a policy which in no sense can be said to be at this moment before the House or the country. When such an attack is made upon us we have no lack of strategical courses to pursue which have high example and authority to commend them. For instance, we might have searched about for someone who would move an Amendment which would altogether baffle the earnest inquirer. Again, we might have moved the "previous Question," and there never was a case more fitted for it. And, lastly, we might have run away. But we are all here, and the hon. Member will find that his kindly inquiries will be met with a not unfriendly smile. But, Mr. Speaker, wonders will not cease. Do my eyes deceive me? The Prime Minister is in his place. This is an abstract Motion brought forward by a private Member on a private Member's night and dealing with a question that cannot be dealt with in this Parliament. What more do we want to taboo it? If there is a debate and a division on such a Motion, it is of no consequence, "for he himself has said it"; and surely he will not think of wasting his time and that of his faithful followers in listening to the discussion. If this would be true, according to the Prime Minister, where inquiries were addressed to a Minister of the Crown with regard to his public policy, while the country had been agitated by a great controversy raging from one end to the other, how much more certainly can we say that it is of no consequence when it merely deals with the opinions of a private Member on a subject which, as I say, is not now prominently before the country. Yet here the right hon. Gentleman is. I presume he must have been lingering in the purlieus of Westminster, and, looking up, he saw that the light was burning, and it occurred to him that the House might be sitting. He has looked in upon us; and I am sure that I express the desire and the feeling of every one on this side of the House when I say that I trust he and his friends will not spend more time among us than is entirely convenient to them.

I pass from this light but still not unimportant aspect of the situation, and I say that the question which the hon. Member has lightly and in this absurd method brought before us is one of the gravest questions that can affect our country. In so far as he makes a demand on me that I should state what, in certain future contingencies, will be the particular policy which I shall recommend to my electors, I say it is a preposterous demand which he has no right to make, and which I altogether decline to satisfy. But as to my opinions on Irish government they are well known to all of you. They have been expressed again and again by action and speech in and out of the House, and I would say further that the course of events during the last two decades, so far from mitigating or weakening my views, has done much to confirm and strengthen them. I would say, whatever may be the right solution of it, this question of the better government of Ireland directly and imperatively confronts both Parties in the State. That has been admitted by us on this side of the House when we voted for the Amendment on the Address moved by the hon. Member for Waterford. It has been admitted by the Government in the terms and the circumstances of Sir Antony MacDonnell's appointment made with the express concurrence of the Prime Minister; and it has been confirmed by the justification offered for the recent Irish policy of the Government by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in another place. This marks the conclusion which both these great Parties have come to within this very year. Let me take first the words of Lord Lansdowne, who said—

> "Anybody who has studied this question is aware that there is room for considerable improvement in that old-fashioned and complicated organisation."

And he said again—

> "In endeavouring to arrive at that result and to break down the barrier which has too long and too often divided Dublin Castle from the rest of the country my right hon. friend "(that is the late Chief Secretary)" was taking a step in the right direction."

These are true words and significant words. Lord Lansdowne is an Irishman, a great personage in that country, devoted to Ireland and spending a great part of his life there, thoroughly acquainted with affairs, and here he speaks of the "barrier which has too long and too often divided Dublin Castle from the rest of the country." I pass from this confession to the Amendment to the Address which was moved by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. What were the terms of that Amendment?—

> "We humbly represent to Your Majesty that the present system of government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people, and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently ineffective and extravagantly costly, and that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and has been proved to be incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people."

Sir, we voted for that Amendment, and hon. Members opposite voted against it; and I think it was perfectly natural that they should do so, and this not only on the ground of the familiar excuse that an Amendment to the Address cannot be accepted by a Government, for it would constitute a vote of want of confidence, but on this other ground, that I admit it is so wholesale an indictment of the whole system of government in Ireland that I could well imagine men of moderate views on the subject shrinking from committing themselves to it. But I invite the House calmly and quietly to take this Amendment clause by clause as I propose to do; and I ask how many Members, if any, will dispute its accuracy? Does any one say the system of government in Ireland is not in opposition to the will of the Irish people? Who can say that with the presence of this huge majority of Irish Members? Does anyone deny that the Irish people have no full voice in the management of their own affairs? Does anyone say that the system is effective and that it is not extravagantly costly? Who is there will say that the system enjoys the confidence of every section of the population, or that there is any section whose confidence it does enjoy? Why even that little section on the other side of the House only gives a grudging confidence when the Government does everything it tells them to do. Lastly, is it disputed that there is great discontent and unrest in Ireland? Is it disputed that the material and intellectual progress of the people is not promoted by the present system? Why, take them one by one, and I will venture to say there is not one man out of ten, be he Unionist, Home Ruler, or be he what he may, who can deny this tissue of charges brought forward by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford.

For a moment let us look back over a period of twenty years. Ireland was then, and had been for years before, seething in social disorder. The old traditional remedy, of course, was coercion; but the time had come when the people of this country were sick of coercion, and on either side men were declaring in a loud voice that they would have no more of it. Then came Mr. Gladstone with his two heroic attempts at remedy. They failed; but who will deny that the attempts, although they ended in failure, had a deep effect in the pacification of the country? There is no man who took a part, humble though it may have been, whether as Member here or as a voter at the polls, in helping towards the adoption of those remedies who has not a share of the credit and satisfaction in bringing about that improved state of things. What was the principle at the root of this policy? It was the right of the Irish people to the management of their own domestic affairs. The successive plans by which this was to be given to them failed to satisfy the country, as I have said; but the principle of self-government, the principle of an elective element that shall be the governing element in Ireland, remains, in our view, the only principle consonant with our constitutional habits and practice, and, what is more, the only principle that will ever work. I came the other day upon a phrase that admirably expresses the matter—

> "Popular control, and popular confidence, which cannot be had without it, are essential to administration of the best kind."

Well, these are our views. I have to ask the House to allow me to make a quotation—and I do not use the words for any purpose of taunt or controversy. They are words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham uttered in 1885. They were often used in the controversy of those days, and I quote them because they are incisive, memorable words, and accurate in their description of the truth—

> "An Irishman at this moment"—

and this is as true now as it was then—

> "cannot move a step without being confronted with, interfered with, controlled by an English official appointed by a foreign Government, and without a shade or shadow of representative authority."

Sir, this is what lies at the root of the mischief; and until the principle of representative authority is applied in such a form as shall give the people of Ireland the effective management of Irish affairs—you will go on if you like with a system like the present, the value of which may be judged by the words I have quoted.

I for my part would be for adopting such methods and such a plan as may appear to me most likely to bring to a successful issue this principle and the policy arising from it. But if I am further asked tostate details to as the particular plan, or a particular method to be adopted, I altogether decline to do so. Again, I may be asked questions as to time and priority. We are all aware of the fact that there are great masses of arrears of British legislation to be dealt with, and there are other questions brought forward calling for consideration, one of the most urgent which I would name being the education question which the Government have raised. If a demand is made that I should say as a private Member what precise priority should be given to each one of those great questions, I say that it is a preposterous demand which ought not to be made. But, the fact is, if we are to have an interrogatory raised on the question of Irish government and Government policy, am I the proper person to be interrogated. ["Yes."] Is it not, rather, the responsible Government? [An HON. MEMBER: They never answer.] I find that a few years ago, in 1895, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham laid down this as a general principle. He said, "He" (the Minister to whom he was replying)

> "is a member of a Government that has forgotten how to govern and has not learned how to resign. Let the right hon. Gentleman resign; we will find him a policy. But we are not going to lend him our prescriptions while he takes the fee. What is he on the Front Bench for? I do not see why we should prescribe until we are called in."

But passing from that, which is, I think, a very sound view taken by the right hon. Gentleman, where is the responsibility in regard to the future policy in, as well as the present condition of, Ireland? It is there (pointing to the Treasury bench). Is there ambiguity? It is there. Is there obscurity? It is there. What is the Irish policy of the Government? Is it a continuance of what they themselves called twenty years of resolute Government, with coercion as its implied sanction and its ultimate development? Is it, on the other hand, the policy of conciliation and co-operation, of which Sir Antony MacDonnell was the herald angel? Or is it the policy—their present apparent policy—of satisfying the Orange faction, which spoke and Sir Antony MacDonnell was dropped at once? Or is it a mosaic or alternation of these three policies?

We have seen how that distinguished public servant was called in and installed in order to carry out the new policy in a new spirit. The Prime Minister was well aware of the views of the man he was employing. "I am an Irishman," said Sir Antony MacDonnell, "a Roman Catholic, and a Liberal in politics. I have strong Irish sympathies." And he added, "I find that there is a substantial measure of agreement between us." Why did this new policy break down? Because it was discovered that Sir Antony MacDonnell, with the concurrence of the Viceroy, was assisting a little group of Irish landlords and leaders of moderate Unionist opinion to carry out this policy of reform and administrative conciliation with the help of the Irish people. That was his offence; but the mention of the elective principle, attenuated as it was and restricted in its scope brought about the explosion. What a spectacle! To see this strong Government, which set before itself ends in themselves worthy and honourable, shrinking back in terror when it found that there was a danger that the adoption of the only means by which these ends could be attained might expose them to the charge of touching the accursed thing and being tainted with Home Rule. They became the slaves of unfounded prejudice. The charge was made. It was carried into the lobbies. Sir Antony MacDonnell was rebuked and the Chief Secretary was sent into the wilderness. Our only puzzle is why he went there unaccompanied—why, when he went into the wilderness he did not take with him the head of the Government, who was well aware of the general drift of the policy the Under-Secretary had in view. This was all owing to the action of a knot of—I do not want to use an offensive expression—a knot of intolerant politicians. Let the House consider for a moment. Supposing this knot of intolerant politicians had acquiesced, would Sir Antony MacDonnell have been told that his conduct was indefensible? Would the Chief Secretary have resigned? No, Sir, on land purchase these hon. Members and their Party were with Sir Antony MacDonnell and Lord Dunraven; but any recognition of the desires of the majority in Ireland, any check on the domination of their own fraction of the Irish people, raised an outcry, the Government ran away, Sir Antony MacDonnell was rebuked, and the Chief Secretary was thrown to the wolves. With this Government the voice of this little section is the voice of Ireland. For the moment, the Government have capitulated, but it cannot be for long. They cannot fight against fate. They are themselves on the high road to the evolution of a new and wholly altered system of government in Ireland, whether they like it or not.

I wish to take no partisan view of this question; but what is the situation? We have had this MacDonnell episode; the Government found that the turning point was reached, and that they must embark on a policy of conciliation, not only of generous and open-handed gifts of money and other methods of kindness to the Irish people, but of conciliation, which meant sympathy and co-operation in the management of the affairs of the country. We see glimmerings of apprehension on the part of the Government of the lesson learned by Ministers and high officials one after another who have gone to Ireland with undetermined minds, or full of prejudice against the Irish view, and yet who have found by experience how indefensible and how devoid of light and hope is the present system of government in Ireland. If the Government had designed to pave the way for what they call and denounce as Home Rule, could they have done better than they have in setting their stamp on the character of the Irish people by inducing Parliament to agree to so vast a grant of British credit, and by entrusting the mass of them with the responsible duties of local government? The Government have gone bail for the Irish people, for their character, for their capacity, for their integrity and—to adopt the poetic word of the late Chief Secretary—for their chivalry. Are you going to say, "Thus far and no further?" Are you going to trust them only up to the doors of Dublin Castle? Is this the last word of your statesmanship? Let me tell the hon. Member for Rochester that it is not the last word of ours. The Liberal Party, through twenty years of effort and sacrifice, amid misrepresentation and vilification, have pursued and contended for the cause of good government in Ireland; and so, as time and circumstances allow, we will prosecute the same beneficent course, believing that we shall have the sympathy of our countrymen with us, believing also that the divisions between the different sections of society in Ireland are healing, and will heal the faster as better government extends, and not without hope, I thank Heaven, that both Parties in the State, as the goal is better realised, will unite in the effort to attain to it.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): When notice was given by the hon. Gentleman opposite of his intention to raise the question of Home Rule, I understood that the hon. Gentleman's object was to challenge the principle and policy of national self-government in Ireland, and I rather welcomed the opportunity which seemed to be opening before the Irish Nationalist Party in this House of once more stating the case of Ireland. But when I read the terms of the Motion I was surprised to find that the hon. Gentleman did nothing of the kind, but confined himself to asking certain Questions—relevant or irrelevant, pertinent or impertinent, of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition as to what his action would be in a contingency that has not yet arisen. I am not sure that in such circumstances there is any necessity for the Irish Party to take part in this debate at all. The Motion does not challenge us; it does not challenge our cause—the cause of Home Rule; it cannot be meant to embarrass us, and, therefore, it seems to me we have only an indirect interest in the discussion. Still I think that if we remained silent our silence would probably be misunderstood and misinterpreted, and, therefore, I propose to state once more frankly to the House the position of the Irish Party and of myself on the question of Home Rule.

If the hon. Gentleman imagines that we are likely to budge one inch from our position on the question of Home Rule, he is likely to be grievously disappointed, and if he expects to confuse the mind, either of the House of Commons or of the country, as to what our attitude on the question of Home Rule is he is likely to be still more grievously disappointed. Our attitude on this question has been absolutely unchanged for twenty-five years. We regard the government of our country by this Parliament as a usurpation; we deny the validity and dispute the moral binding force of the Act of Union. What you call a treaty we say was vitiated *ab initio* by force and fraud. We demand self-government, not as a favour, but as a right; we base our demand, not upon grievance, but upon the inherent and unalienable right of the Irish nation to govern itself. We say plainly that we would rather be governed badly by our own Parliament than well by this Assembly. We are accused of disloyalty. Disloyalty to what? Why are we in Ireland not given something to be loyal to? By nature I believe that Irishmen are as loyal as any people in the world. Yes, but to a system of government maintained by force against the will of the people we are disloyal, and will continue to be disloyal.

The hon. Gentleman did me the honour of quoting a number of speeches of mine. He quoted some speeches of mine delivered in America, and I rather think he did so with the idea of conveying to the House the impression that I had spoken in one sense in America and in a different sense here. [Cries of "No."] I am glad to hear from hon. Members who have been longer in the House a disavowal of any such accusation. I would feel utterly dishonoured and ashamed of myself if I had ever made a statement in America or Ireland more extreme than the statements I have made in this House. I believe in frankness in these matters. I believe we have nothing to gain—I believe that no Party has anything to gain—by a policy of make-believe, evasion, or concealment. I have no objection to state again to this House what my individual attitude on this question is. I believe the present system of government in Ireland is in principle so unconstitutional and in practice so ruinous to all classes and interests in Ireland that, if I had to choose between the continuation of the present system and absolute separation from the Empire, I would not have the slightest hesitation in deciding in favour of separation. More than that, if I believed that there was the smallest reasonable chance of success, I would have no hesitation in advising my fellow-countrymen to endeavour to end the present system by armed revolt. But Sir, while those are my views, I am and always have been profoundly convinced that by constitutional means and within the Constitution it is possible to arrive at a compromise, based upon the concession of self-government, or, as Mr. Gladstone used to say, autonomy, to Ireland, which would put an end to this ancient international quarrel upon terms satisfactory and honourable to both nations. Such was the settlement proposed to Ireland in 1886 and 1893. For reasons which perhaps will be understood, I wish to recall the fact that Parnell accepted in this House the principle and policy of the settlement of 1886 and 1893. He accepted it in the name of the Irish Nationalist Party, and his acceptance of it was ratified by the public opinion of Ireland and of the Irish race in America and elsewhere. I have been recently accused by a distinguished nobleman of having in some way or other repudiated the acceptance of that compromise and settlement. I deny that, and, if necessity arose, I could prove that my denial is true. But, after all, the individual statement of the hon. Member for Waterford, when he was not the representative of the Irish Nationalist Party in the House of Commons, and when he spoke for himself, was a small matter. I repudiate and deny that statement; but, after all, what is important is that, speaking here now, with full authority and responsibility, in the name of the whole Irish Nationalist Party, I say that that Party has not departed one hair's breadth from the position which was taken up in 1886 by Mr. Parnell, and after his death in 1893 by the Irish Members of the day. To-day the position is this. No doubt time and experience have pointed out to us many defects, as we think, in the clauses of the Bills of 1886 and 1893; but so far as the principle and the policy of the settlement contained in those Bills are concerned we never have repudiated them, and to-day we would be willing, as we were in 1886 or 1893, to accept them as bringing to an end, as we would hope for ever, the wretched and blood-stained chapter of English misrule and of consequent Irish disloyalty and resistance.

I cannot in the time at my disposal deal as fully as I would have liked with this question. But let me very shortly recapitulate—summarise, so to speak—the main features of the system of rule in Ireland which, in my judgment, make the Home Rule question an urgent and vital question to-day before both the country and the House of Commons. The present system of rule is unconstitutional, quite apart altogether from its tainted origin in the Act of Union, and in its everyday working practice it is unworkable. The majority of the people who are ruled have no power in the government of the country. The country is governed by a minority. The representation of Ireland in this House has been reduced almost to a farce. Five men from a small corner of Ulster have more power in this House in the government of Ireland than eighty-six men representing the rest of the country. It is unconstitutional in another sense. The people of Ireland have not the benefit of the British Constitution. They are suffering under a permanent disability in the form of an exceptional law which does not exist in England, Scotland, or Wales, or in any other portion of the British Empire—a law under which at the caprice and the will of a single man trial by jury may be suspended and trial by paid servants and deputies of the Executive Government substituted for it. The government is not only unconstitutional; it is a bad government. It does not fulfil any one of the elementary duties of a government. It does nothing for the industrial development of the people; our industries in Ireland were destroyed by Act of this Parliament, and ever since the Union your English Government has done nothing to help in their resuscitation; the population has gone down, and is still going down; labourers and artisans have not decent dwellings; our seaport towns are falling into decay because the piers and harbours built by one of your centralised and nominated boards are crumbling into the sea; our fishing industry is dying; and, above all, our educational system in all its stages—elementary, intermediate, and University — is fifty years behind the educational system of the least progressive country in Western Europe. And this government, unconstitutional, bad, and inefficient, is the most costly in proportion in the world, and, on the statement of your own financial experts, Ireland is over-taxed every year £3,000,000 as compared with the rest of the United Kingdom. Is it any wonder in those circumstances that no class in Ireland is satisfied with British rule? Fifty years ago Lord Chief Justice Whiteside used these words:—

> "He was compelled by respect for truth to admit that the government of Ireland was very inefficiently conducted. He was a Protestaet and a Conservative, but he must say that were Ireland as far removed from England as Canada, the system of government there would be blown to pieces as easily as a house of cards. He would say that the Government of Ireland was opposed to nine-tenths of the intelligence and intellect of the people."

That was fifty years ago, but every word of that was as true of the government of Ireland to-day as it was then. Unfortunately Irish Unionists in the days of Whiteside, just as they have been ever since and are to-day, were silenced by the horrible system of preferment which alone has induced the Irish minority to consent to the robbery and misgovernment of their country. There are some signs to-day of the truth coming to the surface in Ireland. I will not allude to the Dunraven movement, and I will not allude to the recent declaration of men like Sir West Ridgeway, but I do desire to quote two or three words from a recent letter published by Lord Rossmore. Lord Rossmore was, at one time, a Grand Master of the Orange Society in Ireland. He was a man whose name was associated with the most extreme hostility to the principle of self-government for Ireland. He declared that he had come to the conclusion that the extreme section of Unionists in Ireland were seeking to establish the worst form of slavery, and that this was being done by the men who professed no constructive policy whatever in relation to their country or their fellow-countrymen. His Lordship declared that their policy was purely negative, and that the so-called Loyalist minority in Ireland were blindly following the lead of a few professional politicians who felt that their salaries and positions depended on the divisions and antipathies of those who should be working together for the good of their common country. That minority ha not changed. Its sympathies have not widened, and its heart has not softened for a hundred years. It is the same minority which in 1793 opposed the first efforts of the Irish Parliament to secure Catholic emancipation, and which, on the testimony of Cromwell and Lecky, drove the Irish people into open revolt. It is the same minority that sold their country in 1800 for emoluments and honours, and that has ever since opposed every single measure of reform proposed for Ireland. Catholic emancipation, land reform, Church reform, the ballot, the franchise, local government, and every single reform they have opposed, and to-day these place-holders and place-seekers alone oppose Home Rule. Such a system cannot continue. Some people say that Home Rule is dead and others say it is sleeping. Mr. Speaker, this debate has proved that Home Rule is neither dead nor sleeping, but it is a live, urgent, and insistent question, and in my judgment it is now merely a matter of selecting the particular form of the remedy that has to be applied. In my opinion, it is now, as someone has said quite recently, a question of time, method, and opportunity.

I have listened to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition with great attention and some anxiety. I am not called on to declare that that speech is in all particulars alsolutely satisfactory. As far as the right hon. Gentleman himself is concerned, I needed no declaration from him. The right hon. Gentleman has been consistent and courageous all through; and as the Leader of the Liberal Party and as the man who I, for my part, hope will soon be guiding the destinies of this country, his declarations to-night have been worthy of himself and his record. I think the right hon. Gentleman is wise and right in refusing to answer the irrelevant and impertinent Questions which were addressed to him as to what his method would be of advancing the policy he avows in a contingency that has not arisen. I assure the right hon. Gentleman and the Liberal Party that when they succeed to office they will find that the difficulties of the Irish question have been seriously exaggerated, and that the supposed hostility of most of the English people to a fair and moderate settlement of the Irish demand has been enormously exaggerated. They will also find that this will be an urgent and insistent question which will knock loudly at the door of the next Parliament.

So far as our position is concerned words have been quoted to the House, and if I may take a phrase from the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, all I have to say in regard to those quotations is, "What I have said I have said." I have been taunted in regard to our relations with British Parties. Sir, we are an independent Party in this House, and we cannot ally ourselves with any English Party, Liberal or Tory, which does not make the concession of self-government to Ireland a principle in its programme, or which attempts to shelve the demand of Ireland for Home Rule. There is only one way of ruling any intelligent people, and that is by consent. A great Irish statesman, whose greatness has not yet, in my judgment, been fully acknowledged either by his own countrymen or by this House—I allude to the late Mr. Isaac Butt—said in the year 1867—

> "There is but one secret in governing Ireland, as there is in governing any country, and it is to govern for the good of the whole people. Abandon the policy of maintaining any English interest, or any Protestant interest, or any class interest, or any interest but that of the Irish people. . . . When Irish legislation is influenced as exclusively by the wants and wishes of Ireland as English legislation is by those of England, then, and not till then, will Ireland be governed as a free country."

That should be the Irish programme of any wise British Administration, and that Irish programme can only be carried out by the restoration in Ireland of that national Parliament to which the hon. Member alludes in his Resolution.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I have only a few minutes in which to address the House, but I think in those few minutes I can compress all that it is needful for me to say on the present occasion. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has spoken with his wonted lucidity and force, and no man who has heard him can have the smallest doubt as to what his meaning is. He is of opinion that the only cure for the ills of Ireland is a Home Rule scheme on the broad lines of the Bill of 1886 or the Bill of 1893. He does not deny that in certain circumstances he might like more, but he is perfectly prepared to take that, and he is not prepared to take anything less than that. He also thinks that this is a vital question to Ireland and also an urgent question for Ireland, that it cannot be allowed to slumber, and that the next Parliament, if he can manage it, will have to deal with this question in this sense. I am not sure that I interpreted rightly the phrases of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, but, at all events, if they meant anything different from the principles of the Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893 that would not content the Irish Party; it would not, in their opinion, solve the Irish question, and it would not be even a step in the right direction which would be worth taking. That is the view of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. [An Hon. Member: He never said that.] If the hon. and learned Member for Waterford differs from anything I have said let him contradict me. He was amply satisfied with the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman who now leads the Opposition, and he appeared to think that that speech might be summarised in the way I have just summarised his speech—that the right hon. Gentleman opposite holds, as the Member for Waterford holds, that nothing short of the Bill of 1886 or 1893, in its broad principles, will meet the Irish case, and that the Irish case is an urgent case and should be dealt with immediately and on those lines.

That was the interpretation put by the hon. Member for Waterford on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. I confess my powers of interpretation did not quite lead me to the same conclusion. I did not see that clear utterance upon this question which I should have thought he would have given after all the reproaches he has levelled against me for obscurity. I should have thought he would have found it within his powers to make a statement to the House as clear as the one I am making on this subject. He could have left us in as little doubt as the hon. and learned Gentleman has left us. He has not done so. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] He has not only not done so, but he has done nothing towards answering the appeal made to him in the Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman says the appeal is of an unusual character. He says it deals with a matter not before the present Parliament. I agree that it deals with a matter not before the present Parliament, and I agree that up to a relatively recent date appeals upon subjects not before the Parliament in existence were not usually addressed to those who were, or those who expected to be, Ministers of the Crown. But a new practice has arisen, and as the right hon. Gentleman has rather lent himself to that practice, I should have thought he would have been the first to jump up and tell us what it was he was going to recommend in the name of his Party at the next election. And that reminds me. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford, in all the latter part of his speech, assumed that the right hon. Gentleman was speaking for his Party. I did not catch that from the right hon. Gentleman. I do not think he claimed to speak for his Party, and I can easily guess the reason. If he had spoken in the sense assumed by the hon. Member for Waterford, with whom he agrees, he could not have spoken for his Party without at once being disavowed by Gentlemen on his own bench. He wisely refrained from placing himself in a position which no doubt he would have found extremely embarrassing. But when he claims his right as a private Member to hold silence in this matter [OPPOSITION cries of "He did not hold silence," and "He did not run away."] I think he forgets that if the prophecies of which he has been so lavish, and which have been re-echoed by almost every Gentleman who sits behind him, as to the results of the next general election prove true, we are dealing with a period at which he will have ceased to be a private Member, and this Resolution touches a period in which he will no longer be able to claim the privileges of a private Member. I shall have regained that enviable position, [OPPOSITION cries of "When?"] according to the right hon. Gentleman [renewed OPPOSITION cries of "When?"]—when the next general election takes place.

There is one peculiarity which I wonder whether hon. friends of mine have noticed in this debate and in the utterances made by the Party opposite on the subject of Home Rule. I think some statements have been quoted by my two hon. friends to-night in which distinguished Gentlemen belonging to the other side have told us that they will not take office unless they are returned independently of the Irish Party, and that their difficulties will be very great if they depend upon Irish support.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, N.): What about the Education Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Let me translate that into practical language. It means that if hon Gentlemen are returned in a large majority, then the Members for Ireland may whistle, but if they are returned in a small majority, then in "Heaven's name justice for Ireland." And I think some of the difficulty hon. Gentlemen opposite have in stating what exactly they may like to do if they are returned to power in the next Parliament is because they are not yet quite certain whether they will or will not be independent of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland, and until some revelation on the subject is vouchsafed to them we must expect hesitating and ambiguous answers to such questions as have been asked of them by my hon. friends to-night.

The right hon. Gentleman was good enough to interpret certain recent events, of which he gave a most erroneous account—["Oh"]—an utterly and hopelessly erroneous account ["Oh"] as indicating some approximation between the opinion of some hon. Gentlemen on this side with those which he himself holds. There is no such approximation if he holds, as I believe him to hold, the doctrines to which he has constantly given utterance. There is, I believe, not a single man on this side of the House who does not hold as the cardinal article of his political faith that Home Rule for Ireland would be a gift fatal to Ireland and fatal to England. We stand now, one and all of us, as far as I know, exactly where we stood in this matter in the year 1886, when the first Home Rule Bill was introduced, and in the year 1893, when the second Home Rule Bill was introduced, and if, in the course of that political evolution of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke, a time should come when, under the impulse of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, the Radical Party opposite should attempt again, for the third time, to try the same unhappy adventure, I promise them they will find on this side of the House opponents absolutely unanimous and strenuously resolved to say that the unity of the kingdom shall be preserved.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) continued the debate, amid Ministerial cries of "Asquith."

Mr. Tuff rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

The SPEAKER: I cannot accept that Motion. The Question was only put from the Chair at half-past ten, after speeches from the proposer and seconder lasting nearly an hour, in which the opinions of a great number of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen were challenged. Since then there have been only three speeches, and, therefore, I do not think it would be right to put the Question.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, amid considerable interruption from the Ministerial side, continued speaking until twelve o'clock.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

[Third Reading.]

Order for the Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

*Mr. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Owestry) moved that the Bill be recommitted in order to insert a new clause to abolish corporal punishment in military prisons. He asked the House to allow him to state the facts in regard to this subject, which, in his opinion, were of great importance. When the Bill was last before the House the subject was discussed at seven o'clock in the morning when it was impossible to deal with it properly. He thought the flogging which went on in military prisons was unnecessary and inexpedient, and it was a blot on the national name which should be deleted. He was not going to take his stand on the narrow ground that the military prisons were not governed by statute by the more humane Prisons Act of 1898 instead of the Acts of 1865 and 1877. The offences for which flogging in military prisons would be inflicted were mutiny and incitement to mutiny, and gross personal violence to an officer or servant in prison. The rules provided that corporal punishment for these offences should only be inflicted (1) on the order of three visitors specially summoned after inquiry upon oath and determination concerning the matter reported to them; and (2) on approval by the general or other officer commanding the district or station. They further provided that corporal punishment should be inflicted with a "cat" or birch rod, and that the instruments in both instances should be of a pattern approved by the Secretary of State; that the number of lashes or strokes inflicted on a prisoner should not exceed twenty-five; and that the order for the punishment should be duly entered in the appointed manner, and the number of lashes or strokes and the instrument with which they were to be inflicted should in all cases be stated in such order.

The men who were sent to military prisons were committed for military offences. Flogging could not be inflicted for these offences outside the prison. While the number of cases of flogging was not very large, it should be noted that in the best managed prisons that they did not occur at all. It was in the smaller and inferior prisons that they occurred. He had looked carefully into the reports for the last few years, and he found that, in almost every case where flogging was resorted to as a punishment, there was something wrong in the discipline or efficiency of the prison. In 1902 the prisoners at the following places were—Aldershot, 2,986; Dover, 1,757; Gosport, 1,783; York, 1,302; and Malta, 1,638. These were all the prisons in which there were more than 1,000 prisoners. At Dover, two prisoners, at Gosport, fourteen, and at York, six, had to be put in irons, but at none of the prisons mentioned did flogging take place. In the same year the prisoners at the following smaller prisons were—Woking, 228; Curragh, 852; Stirling, 248; Bermuda, 309; Cairo, 408; and Pietermaritzburg, 294. At Woking, four prisoners, Curragh, five, Stirling, two, Bermuda, one, and Pietermaritzburg, one, were put in irons; and the floggings were—Woking, one, Curragh, two, Stirling one, Bermuda, two, Cairo, one, and Pietermaritzburg, one. The statistics for 1903 in regard to the large prisons were:—Aldershot, 3,454 prisoners; Dover, 1,706; Gosport, 1,346; York, 1,417; Dublin, 1,585; and Malta, 1,351. There were put in irons at Dover four, Gosport, eight, and York, eight; while the floggings were — one at Gosport and two at Dublin. As to the smaller prisons for the same year the statistics were—Woking, 899; Curragh, 770; Stirling 265; Bermuda, 274; Cairo, 547; Pietermaritzburg; 117, and Jamaica, 189. There were put in irons—seven at Woking, three at Curragh, one at Stirling, and one at Jamaica. The floggings were—three at Woking and one at Jamaica. These statistics showed that it was all a question of management. He had put together the figures for the three largest prisons—Aldershot, Dover, and Malta. In two years the number of prisoners in these was 12,892; and there was no case of flogging. In the three smaller prisons—Woking, Curragh, and Bermuda—the number of prisoners was 3,332 and there were eight cases of flogging. That was, that in the best managed prisons they did not find the same number of floggings as in small, ill-constructed prisons. He would give one or two extracts from the reports on certain prisons. Aldershot: The Governor's report for 1902 said—

> "From careful observation during the year I am led to believe that the reforms instituted since 1898 are either proving a better deterrent than the system or are so inuring soldiers to strict military discipline that they keep clear much oftener than they used to do."

In Dover they found a similar state of things. The Governor reported in 1902—

> "The new system of treatment is now thoroughly established and the improvements wrought in the condition and general demeanour of the men are evidence of its effectiveness."

Malta was not only a great garrison town, but also a half-way house to those bounds of the Empire, where, as it had been said—

> "There ain't no ten commandments,
> And a man can raise a thirst."

But the conduct of the prison was highly creditable in every way, and led to the most satisfactory results. In 1902 the Governor's report stated—

> "The good behaviour in prison is chiefly due to the tactful manner in which the prisoners are dealt with by the subordinates."

And in 1903 the Governor reported—

> "Experience proves that the present system of dealing with military offenders is both deterrent and beneficial to the soldier. It is a distinct advance on the old conditions when punishment in the form of hard manual labour was the only recognised means of effecting the reform of the soldier."

He came now to the prisons where the treatment was exceedingly severe or the buildings bad and where the results were not good. The first was Woking where the authority, was evidently of the martinet order. The Governor reported in 1902—

> "The destruction of equipment and clothing has lately been pulled up with a very sharp turn, two prisoners having been the same day convicted of the offence and sentenced to eighteen months and seventeen months respectively. The promulgation of the Court-martial proceedings brought about a most salutary effect and warning."

At Curragh he found the Governor made a complaint of want of accommodation. He said in his report for 1902—

> "I sincerely hope that the enlargement scheme will be carried out shortly as the prison is deficient of offices, stores, workshops, reception rooms, etc."

At Bermuda the Superintendent's report was—

> "I consider that the prison is badly built for discipline."

Now, he was convinced that in those cases there was no need for flogging to maintain discipline. Where there were a large number of prisoners discipline was easy, with good management. He had been himself a visiting justice in a large lunatic asylum and discipline was maintained there without flogging. Flogging was not only brutal, but it fell unequally and more heavily on the weak than on the strong. An hon. Member had spoken of the cat-o'-nine-tails, which formerly had three knots on each lash but had now only one; and that the handle which formerly had a spring grip now had no spring; and the hon. Member for Taunton said that when he had seen a prisoner flogged the prisoner laughed. But the hon. Member forgot to say that that might have been a hysterical laugh and he also admitted that the doctor and the nurse had fainted at the horrible sight. He did not believe that the House wished for the continuance of this brutal treatment. He should be told that flogging was necessary to maintain discipline. Necessity was the excuse of tyrants and the creed of slaves. He, himself, did not believe in the necessity. He would remind hon. Members opposite that if they gave a vote for the continuance of this punishment they would be justly accused of voting for inflicting methods of barbarism on the British soldier.

*Mr. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said that the real point at which his hon. friend and colleagues were aiming seemed to have been missed or ignored by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. When a soldier enlisted, although he was told that this odious punishment of flogging was not to be inflicted upon him, he might get into trouble over some trivial offence without any moral stigma attaching to it. There were a number of such for which he might be tried by Court-martial—such as for striking a superior officer, no matter how great the provocation might have been. He was then taken to a military prison. As soon as he came to that military prison he became amenable to the punishment of flogging. But in that prison he remained a soldier. That was the great point of improvement he gladly recognised in their military prisons. The great object was to keep him a soldier, to improve the man as a soldier, and instead of putting him to degrading and useless tasks to improve him in every way in his profession, and with the very best results. But what might happen? The soldier might be a passionate man, and under a warder utterly unfit to have the care of prisoners. That was the very great drawback of military prisons. The hon. Member who moved the recommitment had shown the great difference between the smaller old-fashioned prisons and the large well-appointed prisons. There were double as many corporal punishments inflicted in the former as the latter. That proved that the so-called necessity for punishment of that kind was only an excuse for inability to maintain proper discipline by other methods. In confirmation of that statement, he came across only the previous day the latest Report on the Civil Prisons of Ireland, including the Convict Prison of Mountjoy. Out of 35,765 prisoners and 1,796 punishments for offences, there was not one single case of flogging and only one case of the use of handcuffs. It was a degrading and brutal form of punishment. It was the punishment of slaves and left its marks upon a man, which was as bad as servitude and was a disqualification for civil employment. It left still deeper marks of hatred, revenge, and resentment—exactly the opposite effect to what curative and ameliorative punishment ought to have. From the sympathetic Answers given to Questions by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State he was convinced he would be very glad to be able to dispense with corporal punishment altogether, and he appealed to him whether he could not see his way to the total abolition of the punishment of flogging in military prisons, because, the inmates of those prisons being still soldiers, so long as that existed it could not be said that flogging had been abolished in the British Army.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'now read the third time,' and add the words 'recommitted in respect of a New Clause' (Prohibition of corporal punishment)."—(*Mr. Bright.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, N.) said he could not agree to the Motion for the recommittent of the measure, but he had no complaint to make whatever of the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. He knew the subject had engaged the hon. Member's attention for many years. He had only one complaint to make of the speech of the hon. Member for Oswestry. He thought the hon. Member must know as well as any other hon. Member in the House that the words he used were inexact. It was as true to say that flogging was a necessary part of the institutions of his own family as to say, as he said, that it was part of the institutions of the British Army. The hon. Member knew perfectly well that apart from prison punishment for certain kinds of offences there was no flogging in the British Army, and he knew perfectly well that he himself and any member of his family, if they were to commit any offence and to be committed with hard labour into any civil prison, and were to commit whilst there any of those offences to which flogging applied in military prisons, would be liable to corporal punishment. He could not see what view of duty could compel an hon. Member to make a statement which seemed so very far from the exact fact. The hon. Member for Crewe, he believed, desired that that punishment should be excluded from all prisons. That was a view which might be most consistently held and to which he took no exception, but were they to say that in military prisons an immunity was to be given to those who committed those horrible offences, and in military prisons alone?

Let him give an example of the kind of offence for which such punishment was awarded. He would give them an account of what happened in a military prison—a brutal attack upon a warder, in which a man fell upon the warder, gouged his eye out, committed nameless mutilation upon him, and nearly killed him. That offence was made a subject of inquiry, as all those offences must be, with evidence under oath, and was punished in the way prescribed. Why should there be an immunity for a man committing that offence in a military prison and not in a civil prison? The management of civil prisons at the present day to a large extent discouraged anything of that sort, it was true, but he would remind the hon. Member that the percentage of punishments of that sort was far less in military prisons than in civil prisons, and that in the whole of the United Kingdom there was not last year a single punishment of that kind in the whole of the military prisons. He was glad the hon. Member for Owestry had abandoned the point that there was any distinction in this matter between military and civil prisons with regard to the operation of the Act of 1898. The Rules on this point were clear, the reason being that in the passage of the Act of 1898 the military authorities took legal advice and incorporated the provisions of the Act into the Rules. That was not an accident; it was the deliberate action of the authorities.

The hon. Member had made a somewhat exaggerated statement. It was said that there were fifty per cent. more punishments in the prisons badly reported on than in the prisons well reported on, but when one found that in three years there were two punishments inflicted in the one, and only one in the other class of prison, the fifty per cent. was not quite so formidable. If hon. Members really desired to remove corporal punishment altogether as a protection to warders in prisons, that was a matter which might fairly be argued on the general question; but he failed to see why soldiers who happened to be warders should be deprived of the protection which the jurisprudence of the country considered necessary for warders in ordinary prisons. It was unfortunate that such statements as had been put forward should be made with regard to the Army. If he really believed that hon. Members were as solicitous as they expressed themselves for the private soldier and his welfare he would receive——[Cries of "Order."]

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was in order in calling in question the motives of hon. Members.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman really went so far as to cast any imputation on the motives of hon. Members. He said he did not think they were as solicitous as they professed to be. That is not a very courteous expression.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER thought his meaning was perfectly clear.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): It is grossly offensive.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said his point was that it was unfortunate that this distinction should be drawn to the detriment of the soldiers, and the soldiers should be given to understand that an arrangement existed for their punishment which did not exist for members of the community at large. That was not the case. Whatever the disabilities might be they had been supported by hon. Members opposite, and the Party opposite had introduced a similar Bill year after year. He thought he had given sufficient reasons why the Bill should not be recommitted, and he hoped the Amendment would be rejected.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON deeply regretted the attitude the Government had taken up in this matter, as, after the discussion of last week, he had been hopeful that they would, upon reconsideration, have been prepared to make such changes in the Bill as would place soldiers in the position in which the public believed them to be, viz., that of members of an Army in which flogging had been entirely abolished. The occupants of military prisons were soldiers, and when they were flogged they were flogged as soldiers; therefore it could not truly be said that flogging had been abolished in the British Army. He yielded to no man in his desire to get in the Army the very best class of men, but, speaking from communications he had received from men who served in South Africa, he could assure the House that the unnecessarily harsh treatment to which they were subjected, and the neglect to pay the arrears due to them——

Mr. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. Member that arrears of pay are one thing, but flogging is another.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said he would be sorry for the impression to be spread abroad that soldiers in military prisons were subjected to a greater stigma than criminals in civil prisons. It was true that by rule the Act of 1898 had been applied to military prisons, but it was quite possible for the authorities to withdraw from them the benefits of that Act, whereas the occupants of civil prisons enjoyed those benefits as a legal right. He regretted that the Amendment had not been accepted by the Government, because its acceptance would have shown a desire to mitigate any unnecessary hardship and merciless treatment to which soldiers might be subject.

Mr. DILLON reminded the House that the abolition of flogging in the Army itself was one of the first works of the Irish Party. He remembered that when twenty-six years ago, under the leadership of Mr. Parnell, they endeavoured to free the British soldier from the liability to punishment by flogging they were denounced by military men as being anxious to destroy the *morale* of the Army. All the arguments the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward that night were made familiar to Members at that time; over and over again the details of the hideous crimes committed by soldiers were related; and the House was asked whether they were going to withdraw from officers the protection which the power to give this punishment afforded them. But were there no outrages committed in the streets of our cities? Why should a warder have special protection and the ordinary policeman not? Many years ago flogging was abolished in the ordinary prisons of Ireland, and the universal testimony of inspectors was that discipline was improved. In the penal prison of Mountjoy flogging was legal, but, seeing the good effect the abolition of flogging had had in the ordinary prison, the governor decided to attempt to maintain discipline at Mountjoy without physical punishment. The effect of the experiment was such that the same course had been followed by successive governors, with the result that flogging, although legal, had been practically abolished for many years. If discipline could be not only maintained, but improved, without flogging and with the worst class of criminals, surely a similar result could be secured in military prisons. In military prisons there were always a number of men who had not committed any moral offence whatever. A great number of military offences arose from men losing their temper, perhaps under great provocation, and committing breaches of discipline which, although they had to be punished, did not indicate any depravity of moral character.

No man, unless he had served a term of imprisonment, could really realise the conditions under which prisoners lived. Subject to prison discipline, knocked about by warders, no man could be sure that he would not lose his temper and become liable to this horrible punishment. The terrible thing about the flogging system was that a man of really good moral character might have inflicted upon him this hideous punishment from which the victim never wholly recovered. If in a moment of exasperation a man committed some offence against prison discipline he was liable to be subjected to this hideous punishment from which he never recovered, and he was never the same man afterwards, for he received marks of degradation which remained with him for life. It was the degradation that was so horrible, and this punishment was frequently inflicted on account of momentary explosions of passion. The Secretary for War had met this argument in a most improper way. The majority of the cases in which flogging was resorted to were instances of conflicts between the prisoners and the warders in which the prisoner was very often brutally treated in the first place by the warder. He had known cases where warders had provoked prisoners by striking them with heavy keys, knocking them down senseless, and even after this punishment the unfortunate prisoner was charged with assaulting the warder and punished again. It was nothing short of insolence for the Secretary of State for War to recite a case of an atrocious assault upon a warder. He deeply sympathised with the hon. Member for Oswestry who had introduced this subject, and he thought the common-sense of the country would support his views. He thought the more humane treatment now in vogue in the prisons of Ireland ought to be good enough for military prisoners.

*Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) reminded hon. Members that in time of war flogging was regarded as the only alternative to being shot. Other punishments were now substituted, but care should be taken that the capital punishment was not increased. He thought that in regard to flogging his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War was as sympathetic as anybody else. He was of opinion, however, that both in civil and military prisons they might adopt some form of punishment instead of flogging. He was quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman would be anxious to do this if he could see his way clear to adopt it.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said he had refreshed his memory in regard to a statement he made on this question upon a previous occasion, and he had very little to withdraw. He found that the position had been very materially altered, and instead of men being flogged for very trivial offences they were only punished in this way for the more serious offences. In 1895 there was a case of flogging for barricading the cell door, another for attempting to commit suicide, and another for damaging prison property. He was glad that now there were only two offences—mutiny and assault—for which prisoners could be flogged. He agreed with the hon. Member for East Mayo that flogging was not a deterrent. He did not see what object could be gained by flogging—it was no protection to the warders, and there were other methods which would prove a much greater deterrent without the infliction of pain. He objected to the system of flogging because it brutalised not only the person who was flogged but the individuals who inflicted it and also those who witnessed it. They had all heard of the prison doctor who, although accustomed to all sorts of horrible sights, actually fainted at the sight of a prisoner being flogged. That was only one instance of the brutalising effect of flogging. The sight of flogging might be shocking to those who witnessed it for the first time, but after one had seen it three or four times he became callous and demoralised. Flogging a man lowered his self-respect, and if they did that they spoiled the chance of reforming him. In one of his books on India Lord Roberts referred to a case in which men were flogged for destroying saddlery, and stated that as soon as they got new saddles to replace those destroyed they at once destroyed them. Lord Roberts expressed himself very much aggrieved at their having been flogged, and his gratification that they were not flogged again for the second offence. These men afterwards had a high record in the British Army. If they had been punished in another way discipline might have been equally well supported. He thought discipline could be maintained in military gaols without recourse being had to this cruel treatment. The prisoners in these gaols were sentenced for special offences for which no civilian could be indicted. The fact that these men had volunteered their service for the defence of the country was a consideration which made it the duty of the House to see that no act of injustice was done by which they might be brutalised. The sooner flogging was abolished the better it would be for the country and the Army. He was informed that in the military gaols of France and Germany flogging had been abolished. If these countries could maintain military discipline without that form of punishment surely the same thing could be done in Great Britain.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said he had listened carefully to the arguments of hon. Gentlemen on the other side, and as there was another aspect of the question he would endeavour to place it before the House in a temperate way. The hon. Member for the Saffron Walden Division had referred to the degradation which the punishment of flogging involved. While he himself was in the Army he had seen many men flogged, but he never knew of a good man being flogged. He had known many bad men flogged who became good men afterwards. As a child he had himself been flogged, and he believed he well deserved it. [AN HON. MEMBER: You ought to get more of it.] They knew the proverb "Spare the rod, and spoil the child." If it was good for a child, surely it was not altogether wrong for the soldier who transgressed against the first duty of his profession, namely, obedience. If a soldier on the field was guilty of insubordination, what were they to do? The alternative to flogging him was to shoot him. The hon Gentleman opposite had stated that discipline was maintained in the French and German armies without flogging. If a French or German soldier struck an officer he would be shot at once.

MR. SPEAKER: The debate is rather tending to a discussion of the old methods and circumstances under which the punishment of flogging was imposed. The question now before the House is merely in regard to flogging for particular offences.

COLONEL SANDYS accepted the ruling. A certain class of men were so brutal to start with that the only way to deal with them was to flog them. In the case of unmitigated ruffians who committed assaults on women and children the penalty of flogging was the only one that appealed to them. Men of that class were more comfortable in prison than in their own homes. If they knew that when they offended against prison discipline they would have to suffer in their person they would hesitate before they did anything to bring this punishment upon themselves. It did not brutalise them because they were brutal to start with.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said he would instance a case which he thought afforded the most scathing commentary on the whole system. In 1902 in Curragh Gaol two prisoners received corporal punishment. In one of these cases the punishment was inflicted because the prisoner struck at the chief warder with his dinner knife on that officer opening the cell door to disarm him, he being seen in the act of cutting his throat. Instead of being flogged that man ought to have been sent to a lunatic asylum. That was a complete answer to the case brought forward by the Secretary of State for War. He thought his hon. friend had made out a very good case indeed for his Motion. That case was that in good, well-constructed prisons there were no instances of corporal punishment, whereas in ill-constructed and badly conducted prisons there was a good deal of corporal punishment. He would give two instances of a good prison, and two of a bad. The Medical Officer of Malta Military Prison said in the report for 1902—

> "I am certain that the present system of treatment in military prisons is proving very beneficial to the welfare of the soldier, and shows its value more and more as time goes on. I know that the prisoners are now better off, morally and physically, give little or no trouble, take an interest in their work, and are improved in many ways by their stay in prison, whilst their soldier qualities are not depreciated. In this prison there are now no cases of violence or attempted suicide, very little malingering, and the numbers reporting sick are much less than in former years. In a word, the soldier is not now treated as a hopeless, degraded, troublesome item, to be got rid of as quietly as possible, but is made to feel that he is still a soldier capable of regaining, by good conduct, his lost position."

Now, in that prison there were 1,638 prisoners and not one single case of corporal punishment. He now turned to Aldershot Prison, on which the Governor reported—

> "From careful observation during the year, I am led to believe that the reforms instituted since 1898, by which the prison system became strict military discipline, strict separation, drill and gymnastics, and industrial work, instead of convict garb, convict discipline, shot drill and oakum picking, are either proving a better deterrent than the old system, or are so inuring soldiers to strict military discipline that, having once undergone a sentence of imprisonment, they keep clear much oftener than they used to do."

Now in that prison there were 2,986 prisoners, and not a single case of corporal punishment that year. He now came to the Bermuda Prison, which was one of the bad prisons. The Superintendent of that prison in his report for 1902 said—

> "I consider that the prison is badly built for discipline when there are more than ten or twelve prisoners, owing to the number of passages and turns, and it is therefore nearly impossible for one warder to superintend more than four prisoners when moving about the prison, especially as five out of seven prison officials are on probation, and at present rather inexperienced in the work. The consequence is that there is a great tendency among the prisoners to communicate with each other and this offence is of frequent occurrence."

In that prison there were 309 prisoners; one was in irons and two had received corporal punishment. The report of the Governor of Stirling Military Prison was—

> "The present accommodation is most inadequate."

and of the 228 prisoners two were in irons and one had received corporal punishment.

Now, having regard to these facts, he considered that his hon. friend had made out his case; and that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War should institute an independent inquiry, and, if the right hon. Gentleman agreed to do so, his friend would, he believed, withdraw his Amendment with the approval of a considerable number of hon. Members on that side of the House. But, if the right hon. Gentleman resisted that proposal and continued the high and haughty manner which he had hitherto exhibited, that conduct was sure to meet with the reward which it deserved.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War that he could not continue to treat this matter in the cavalier manner he had done in his first reply. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the most important changes that had taken place in the recruiting of the Army had been secured by discussions on the Army Annual Bill. Everyone acquainted with the Army knew that the soldiers thought a great deal about this flogging of their comrades in military prisons. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War that when the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich brought forward the question of recruits bringing characters from former employers, that was only carried by discussion on the Army Annual Bill. In point of fact the whole scheme of the Army Annual Bill had been greatly modified as a result of such discussions as were now in progress. If that were so, then the Third Reading of the Army Annual Bill was the proper moment to raise questions of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had argued that it was unreasonable to discuss all these points, because former Parliaments had passed this Bill; but he contended that when such matters of great importance to the welfare of the Army were raised, they ought to be fully discussed. The right hon. Gentleman also argued that it was only soldiers who committed assaults on warders who were flogged; and he gave an instance. But that case was well countered by his hon. friend who showed that on two other occasions flogging was inflicted for assaults which were the very natural outcome of a soldier being driven to desperation. The soldier was liable to be imprisoned for so-called crimes, which were not only not misdemeanours, but which could hardly be designated by the name of faults if not committed by a soldier. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War that it was possible for a soldier who omitted to pay for a chartered vehicle after a certain time to be imprisoned. But that was not the only part of the Annual Act which permitted a man to be be imprisoned. It was a fact that soldiers, especially on active service, or in the period immediately preceding active service, were imprisoned for offences of the slightest character. There was a case which came before his notice in South Africa in which a soldier was Court-martialled for sleeping at his post. There was no doubt whatever this unfortunate man had suffered most severely from toothache and was in a most debilitated condition, having had little sleep for many days. Curiously enough he was about to be sent home under the terms of his enlistment, and had only about half an hour more to stand at his post. It was actually within ten minutes of that man becoming free from service that an officer came round and found him asleep. He was sentenced to a term of imprisonment for several years, and might easily have been shot. Could it be wondered at that military prisoners, sentenced in that way for such offences, were frequently violent?

Military prisoners, as the hon. Member for Crewe and those who had studied the question well knew, bitterly resented very often the offences for which they were sentenced. If they bitterly resented them, could it be right that those men, sentenced for crimes for which no civilian would be sentenced, should be liable to be flogged? It would be wise that they should abolish flogging in all prisons, but whether they did that or not in all prisons, undoubtedly they had better abolish it in military prisons. It was an added reason for so doing that it was extremely likely that unless some change took place in their present Government, a greatly increased number of men would be subject to military law. Under the provisions brought before the House only the previous day, a greatly increased number of men would be subject to military law and liable to imprisonment for offences which would not be even faults except under military law. There would be an increased number of men who would vehemently resent the results of a law which they never foresaw. There would, therefore, be all the more reason why that flogging, which was much more prevalent in military than in civil prisons he still contended, and which did no good to the man and certainly harm to the system, would be on the increase. Therefore he asked the right hon. Gentleman to make some concession. Hon. Members on that side had not raised that discussion in any factious spirit. There might have been some resentment on a prior occasion, when there was a failure to disclose information which they thought ought to be given, but there was no such feeling on the present occasion. But there was a very general opinion on the part of hon. Members that flogging in military prisons should be abolished, and there had been very forcible reasons adduced to show that flogging in well-managed prisons did not obtain at all, but in badly-managed prisons did obtain. Therefore there was reason to suppose that flogging might be unnecessary in well-managed prisons, and therefore that, after all, hon. Members on his side might be right, and that flogging in itself was a bad thing. Taking all those things into consideration, he would beg the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the answer he had given, and if possible to grant some inquiry into the flogging in military prisons in order to see whether it might not be possible altogether to abolish a degrading, unworthy, and altogether unwise punishment.

Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 171; Noes, 106. (Division List No. 136.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. J. FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E. W (Bury S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynemouth
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Sir J. (Staffords. N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks. N.R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt Hn J. Parker (Lanarks
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C E (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cogan, Denis J.

Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay,Alexander(Lanark,NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hardie,J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Horniman, Frederick John
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, P. J.(Westmeath,N.)
Kennedy, Vincent P.(Cavan,W
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murnaghan, John
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (T'pper'ryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron, Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, RtHn.CR.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, Arthur Walters (NDorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Bright and Mr. Tomkinson.

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 171; Noes, 105. (Division List No. 137.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,RtHn.SirH.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hon.A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, RtHnGeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt.Hn.SirMichael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H.M.(DublinUniv.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish,V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos.H.A.E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies,SirHoratioD.(Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants,W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay,SirR.B.(Invern'ssB'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon.EdwardAlgernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,PhilipS.(Warwick,S.W.
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, SirAugustusFrederick
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene,SirE.W(B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, HenryD.(Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hn. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton,Marqof(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, Sir Jas.(Staffords.N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hon.James HenryCecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Kenyon,Hon.Geo.T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney,RtHon.Col.W
Kerr, John

Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn. H.L.W. (MileEnd)
Lawson, John G (Yorks. N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmo'th
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, SirLewis (Edinburgh W
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, RtHn. SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W.JH.(Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Morgan, DavidJ.(Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, HerbertPike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, RtHnJ.Parker(Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W.F.D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A.(Ormskirk)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord(Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J.M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E.(Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W.H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cogan, Denis J.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N. E.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, Jamas Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Hardie, J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Lief (Appleby
Jones Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, P. J. (Westmeath, N.
Kennedy, VincentP.(Cavan, W)
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex.(Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron, Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B,)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.HnC.R.(Northants
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, ArthurWalters(N.Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Bright and Mr. Tomkinson.

Whereupon Mr. Secretary ARNOLD-FORSTER claimed, "That the Main Question be now put."

Main Question put accordingly.

The House divided:—Ayes, 169; Noes, 100. (Division List No. 138.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hn, John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, RtHn Gerald W (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brassey, Albert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, RtHn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Egerton, Hn. A. de Tatton
Fellows, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'rn'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredrk.
Gordon J. (Londonderry, S.)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E W (B'rySEdm'nds
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords. N. W.)
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alex.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Rt. Hn. J. P. (Lanarks)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)

Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cogan, Denis J.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander(Lanark, NE
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Johnson, John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshr.
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, P. J. (Westmeath. N.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
Kilbride, Denis
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
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Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Patrick O'Brien and Mr. Keir Hardie.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at four minutes before Two o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXLIV.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Advertisement Regulations [H.L.]	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Committee, 7th April (904)
*Bills of Exchange Act 1882 Amendment [H.L]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 7th April (905)
Continuation Schools [H.L.]	*Lord Bishop of Hereford*	2nd Reading (defeated) 7th April (875)
*Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydvil Scheme Confirmation)	*Marquess of Londonderry*	Committee Report, 3rd April (86), 4th April (285)
Patent Designs and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) [H.L.]	*Lord Coleridge*	Read 2^a 10th April (969)
*Service of Militiamen [H.L.]	*Earl of Donoughmore*	Committee Report, 3rd April (87) Read 3^a and passed 6th April (592)
Street Betting [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Passed 4th April (285)
*Workmen's Compensation [H.L.]	*Lord Belper.*	Read 2^a 4th April (263)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army (Annual)	*Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*	Read 2^o 3rd April (253) Committee Report, 6th April (761) Read 3^o and passed 12th April (1517)
Bills of Exchange	*Sir Wm. Holland*	Read 1^o 10th April (1041)
Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland)	*Mr. Nannetti*	Read 3^o and passed 11th April (1377)
Coal Mines (Weighing of Minerals)	*Mr. Compton Rickett*	Read 2^o 31st March (22)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 12th April (1414)
County Courts	*Sir Albert Rollit*	Read 1° 5th April (477)
Drunkenness (Ireland)	*Mr. T. W. Russell*	Read 2° 7th April (959)
Education Acts Amendment	*Mr. Lambert*	Read 1° 11th April (1284)
Elementary Education (Feeding of Children)	*Mr. Hay*	Bill withdrawn 11th April (1284)
Highways	*Mr. H. Hobhouse*	Read 1° 11th April (1284)
*Infectious Diseases (Ireland)	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1° 10th April (1042)
Land Tenure	*Mr. Lambert*	Read 1° 11th April (1284)
Licensing Act (1902) (Registration of Clubs) Amendment	*Mr. Worsley-Taylor*	Read 1° 3rd April (152)
Local Authorities (Qualification of Women)	*Dr. Shipman*	Read 2° 31st March (46)
Local Government (Scotland)	*Mr. Maxwell*	Read 1° 11th April (1285)
London Hospitals (Exemption from Rates)	*Mr. Hayes Fisher*	Read 1° 3rd April (151)
Lunacy Acts Amendment (London)	*Sir John Tuke*	Read 1° 5th April (477)
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister	*Colonel Lockwood*	Read 2° 7th April (914)
*Military Manœuvres [H.L.]		Read 1° 11th April (1283)
Mortgage of Premises	*Sir Wm. Holland*	Read 1° 10th April (1041)
Old Age Pensions	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 12th April (1414)
Parliamentary Voters Registration	*Mr. Cremer*	Read 1° 5th April (477)
Public Health (No. 2)	*Dr. Hutchinson*	Read 1° 5th April (476)
Registration of Firms	*Mr. Emmott*	Read 1° 5th April (477)
*Reserve Forces [H.L.]		Read 1° 11th April (1284)
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APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1905.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in preceding Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Public Records (Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues),—Copy of Second Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes and Documents in the Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1].	31 March	4 weeks

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

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Right Hon. A. Lyttelton.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
Marquess of Lansdowne.

Secretary of State for the Home Department
Right Hon. A. Akers-Douglas.

Secretary of State for India
Right Hon. W. St. John Brodrick.

Secretary (Chief) for Ireland
Right Hon. W. H. Long.

Secretary for Scotland
Marquess of Linlithgow.

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